Hafa Adai!

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House passes bill adding members to PDAC. PAGE 3

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Rota mayor found innocent

» Common-law wife also not guilty in corruption case

By KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA
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REPORTER

Atalig

The corruption case of Rota Mayor Efraim Atalig and common-law wife Evelyn Atalig that has dragged on for nearly two years came to an end yesterday with federal court jurors unanimously deeming the Ataligs innocent on all counts.

See ROTA on Page 4

KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA

David Banes, left, and Steven Pixley, court-appointed counsels for Mayor Efraim Atalig and common-law wife Evelyn Atalig, respectively, speak to the media yesterday after their clients' not guilty verdict in their corruption case in the U.S District Court for the NMI.

Guam loses 2 more people to COVID-19

By JUSTINE NAUTA
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REPORTER

Guam has reported two more COVID-19 deaths yesterday, Aug. 26, one was a patient and another was a nurse at the Guam Memorial Hospital.

According to Guam Gov. Lou Leon Guerrero, both patients passed away five min-

See GUAM on Page 4

COMMUNITY VULNERABILITY

LEGEND:
- **Red:** Least safe
- **Orange**
- **Yellow**
- **Blue**
- **Green:** Safest

Source: Office of the Governor

AT A GLANCE

As of 6pm, Aug. 26, 2020

GUAM	OLD	NEW	TOTAL
Positive	984	0	984
Recovered	429	0	429
Active	471	0	548
Deaths	7*	2	9*
Cumulative Number of Persons Tested			34,550

SAIPAN	OLD	NEW	TOTAL
Positive	54	0	54
Deaths	2	0	2
Cumulative Number of Persons Tested			12,920**

*Total includes a sailor from the USS Theodore Roosevelt.

**Total count includes the number of persons tested on Saipan, Tinian, and Rota.

**With guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, CHCC has opted to not report active and recovered cases.

Source: Joint Information Center - Guam, Commonwealth Health Care Corp.

USCIS modifies policy on touchback rule for CWs

» Kilili, Rep. Yumul say it's great news to employers, small businesses, foreign workers

FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

Sablan

In response to stakeholder feedback and disruptions by the COVID-19 pandemic, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services announced yesterday that it is modifying its policy on implementing the requirement that CNMI-Only Transitional Workers leave the U.S. for at least 30 days

See USCIS on Page 4

More than $5M in child tax refunds to be released

Gov. Ralph DLG Torres and Lt. Gov. Arnold I. Palacios announced on Wednesday that the Department of Finance is set to release its first distribution of 3,039 tax refund checks for the Additional Child Tax Credit (ACTC) amounting to $5.54 million.

"We thank our community's patience as Finance and Rev & Tax work hard to process these tax returns for distribution this week. Lt. Gov. Palacios and I thank Secretary of Finance David DLG Atalig and director of Revenue and Taxation Tracy B. Norita, as well as their hardworking teams, for their hard work and dedication to getting these checks out to families," said Torres.

Taxpayers who selected

See TAX on Page 4

INSIDE

LOCAL
Miss Earth NMI candidate Julia Biton is putting her advocacy into action and expressing her love toward the environment.

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BUSINESS
With the COVID-19 pandemic, most people would rather stay home and keep safe and because of this, many have picked up gardening.

PAGE 12

WORLD
Spain cleared the way for more localized lockdowns and deployed the military to bolster the country's faltering attempts to trace infections.

PAGE 13

SCAN ME WITH A COMPATIBLE QR READER TO KEEP UPDATED ON ALL THE LATEST NEWS.

Local

IF IPI FAILS TO PAY $3.15M IN REGULATORY FEE BY OCT.

Acting executive director says CCC can survive only a few months

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

Commonwealth Casino Commission acting executive director Andrew Yeom said yesterday that if Imperial Pacific International (CNMI) LLC fails to pay the $3.15 million in regulatory fee by the October 2020 deadline, CCC can manage only to survive for a few months.

Yeom in an interview said CCC will not entertain IPI's request to delay the payment of the regulatory fee until 30 days before the scheduled reopening of its casino in Garapan.

"That is not an issue that could be entertained by anyone here. It is engraved into the law," he said, citing the statute.

The acting executive director said the law specifically clarifies the number how much IPI is supposed to pay and by when.

Yeom said CCC is merely the enforcing entity of local and federal gaming laws.

He said the $3,150,000 in regulatory fee is set by a local statute.

On the $15,502,570 in annual casino licensing fee, Yeom said CCC is in no position to entertain bargains or deals with IPI as it is set by local statute.

"Only the CNMI Legislature has the authority to amend this," Yeom said.

He said since both the annual casino licensing fee and regulatory fee are set by law, CCC is in no position to bargain how much or when IPI pays their responsibilities.

The deadlines for the annual casino licensing fee was last Aug. 12 and for the annual casino regulatory fee is this Oct. 1.

He said if the regulatory fee is not paid by the Oct. 1 deadline, it will affect CCC tremendously because it's their source of operation.

"It's much the same thing like the Las Vegas Commission, New Jersey Commission. They are all funded by the operators. In this case, only one operator," he said.

Yeom confirmed that CCC still has some reserve funding for the upcoming months should IPI fail pay the annual regulatory fee, which funds the commission.

Yeom

"At this time, the commission cannot discuss these hypotheticals in specific as the dialogues are ongoing and there are no definitive courses of actions that have been determined," he said.

Yeom said the usual process would have the CCC initiate an investigation on the late or nonpayment of the fees.

"Conclusion of the investigation may or may not result in disciplinary actions e.g. monetary sanctions, license suspension, and/or even license revocation among other things after proper approval from the board," he said.

Yeom said they have discussions within CCC about the issue and as well as the Legislature to see what else can be done in terms of prolonging the life of CCC's operation.

He said CCC has 45 to 50 employees.

Last Aug. 18, Gov. Ralph DLG Torres notified IPI of the government's intent to suspend or revoke IPI's exclusive casino license.

Torres wrote a letter that serves as a notice of the government's intent and also in response to IPI chief executive officer Donald R. Browne's letter dated last Aug. 11.

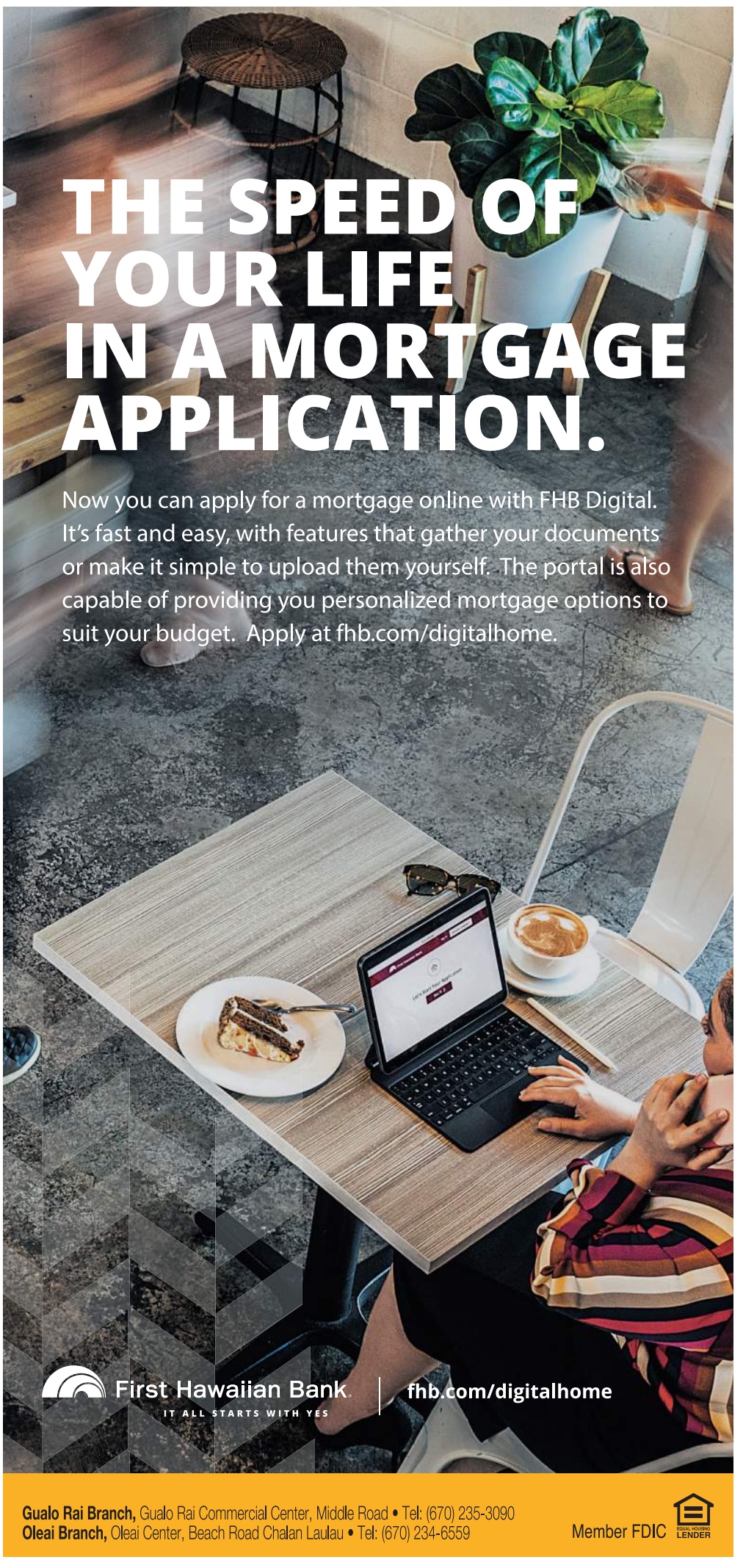
The governor said pursuant to Section 31 of the Casino License Agreement (CLA), IPI is now entitled to an "adequate and reasonable time to cure" the breach.

In the Aug. 11 letter, Browne informed Torres, Senate President Victor B. Hocog (R-Rota), House Speaker Blas Jonathan T. Attao (R-Saipan), and other government officials that IPI indeed will not be able to pay the $15.5 million in annual license fee due by the Aug. 12 deadline.

Browne said pursuant to Section 25 of the CLA, and because of the worldwide pandemic, IPI requests an abatement of the casino license fee for the year 2020.

Browne also proposes that payment of the $3 million to support the operations of CCC that IPI owes by this October, be delayed until 30 days before the scheduled reopening of IPI's casino.

Citing the COVID-19 pandemic that grips the world, Browne described what happened as a classic "force majeure," and event that effects more than just IPI and that was beyond IPI's control.


THE SPEED OF YOUR LIFE IN A MORTGAGE APPLICATION.
Now you can apply for a mortgage online with FHB Digital. It's fast and easy, with features that gather your documents or make it simple to upload them yourself. The portal is also capable of providing you personalized mortgage options to suit your budget. Apply at fhb.com/digitalhome.
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EQUAL HOUSING LENDER

First lady Diann Torres promotes FitBeat

First lady Diann Torres is encouraging everyone of all ages to join a free physical fitness program at the Garapan Central Park.

Dubbed FitBeat, the program would like to promote healthy living on Saipan and Tinian.

"We are working so hard to get this program going on Rota as well, we do have obstacles in finding a venue but our coach is willing to go there," said Torres.

Joel Vallega who is the fitness instructor, leads the aerodance and cardio kickboxing. In addition, the first lady also said the FitBeat program has added core intense training led by Rotarian Irene Holl.

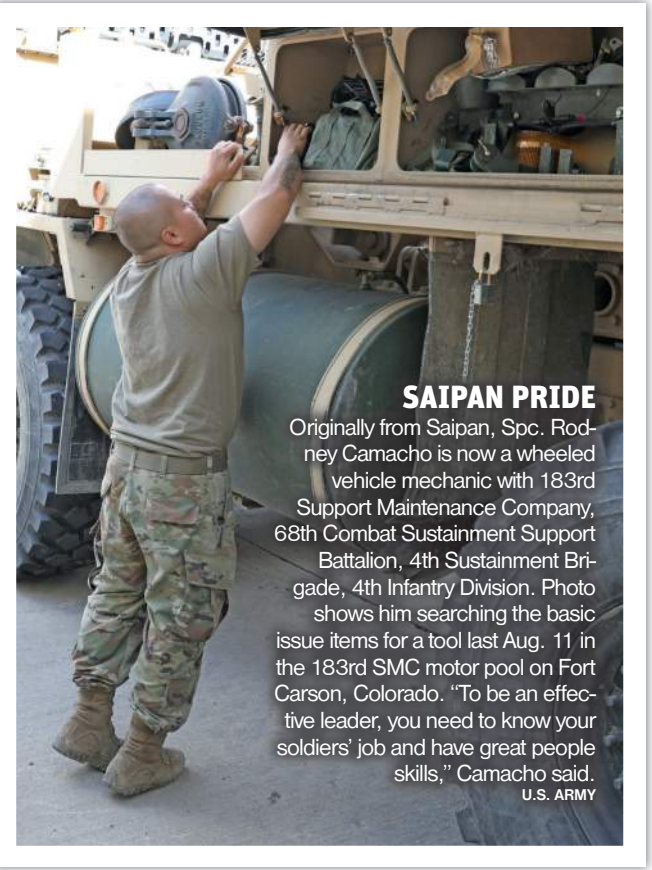
The program celebrated its first year annniverasy last July. FitBeat is held at the Garapan Central Park, from Monday to Friday, 6:30pm-7:30pm, and Saturday, 6pm-7pm.

Vince Cabrera, a participant of the program, said, "It hit me when my doctor said I have diabetes and high blood pressure, so I joined Zumba. It takes a real man to do Zumba."

"It is a challenge, and also I challenge others in this journey. The compliments keep me going, the transformation we are going through is a good feeling you can't comprehend unless you experience it for yourself. This is not about me, it is FitBeat. The people around me who carried me and stood beside me," he added.

Cabrera thanks coach Joel Vallega, first lady Diann Torres, his wife and kids. "These are my superheroes, they are saving my life. And they are saving other people's lives as well.

The FitBeat program is open to all ages who want to stay healthy, and it is free. ***(Chevy Alipio)***


SAIPAN PRIDE
Originally from Saipan, Spc. Rodney Camacho is now a wheeled vehicle mechanic with 183rd Support Maintenance Company, 68th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 4th Sustainment Brigade, 4th Infantry Division. Photo shows him searching the basic issue items for a tool last Aug. 11 in the 183rd SMC motor pool on Fort Carson, Colorado. "To be an effective leader, you need to know your soldiers' job and have great people skills," Camacho said.
U.S. ARMY

House passes bill adding members to PDAC

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

The House of Representatives unanimously passed yesterday a bill that amends a statute to include additional members to serve on the Planning and Development Advisory Council.

The Office of Planning and Development (OPD) was established to "improve the planning process in the CNMI, to increase the effectiveness of government and private actions, to improve coordination among different agencies and levels of government, to provide for wise us of the CNMI's resources, and to guide the future development of the CNMI."

Guerrero

In the OPD, there is a Commonwealth Planning and Development Advisory Council to be chaired by the council members.

Rep. Joseph Lee Pan Guerrero (R-Saipan), who introduced House Bill No. 21-106 HS1, said the Office of Planning and Development with the recommendation from the administrator there are some minor amendments and inclusion as members of the Council.

Guerrero, who chairs House's Commerce and Tourism Committee, explained the amendments and the new members of the council.

Under the proposed legislation, the council shall be comprised of the following members: director of the Office of Planning and Development; administrator of the Bureau of Environmental and Coastal Quality; secretary of the Department of Public Works; secretary of the Department of Public Lands; secretary of the Department of Lands and Natural Resources; secretary of the Department of Commerce; and Zoning administrator.

The other members are: executive director of the Commonwealth Utilities Corp.; managing director of the Marianas Visitors Authority; a representative from the Office of the Mayor of Tinian and Aguiguan; a representative from the Office of the Mayor of Rota; a representative from the Office of the Mayor of Saipan; a representative from the Office of the Mayor of the Northern Islands; president of the Saipan Chamber of Commerce; chairperson of the Governor's Council of Economic Advisors; a member of the House of Representatives who shall be appointed by the speaker; and a member of the Senate who shall be appointed by the Senate president.

The other members are the chief executive officer of the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp.; secretary of the Department of Finance; executive director of the Commonwealth Ports Authority; chairperson of the Marianas Alliance of Non-Governmental Organizations; a representative of the education system; special assistant of the Commonwealth Bureau of Military Affairs; secretary of the Department of Community and Cultural Affairs; and commissioner of the Department of Public Safety.

The bill proposed to increase to 25 from the original 15 members of the Commonwealth Planning and Development Advisory Board.

SCS burglar gained entrance with a rock

By KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA
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REPORTER

The suspect who broke into Saipan Community School and church gained entrance into the building through a rock that was thrown through a glass door.

According to Amanda Dunn, SCS principal and superintendent, the burglar who attempted to burglarize the ministry center building of the school and who remains unknown threw a large rock that shattered a glass door.

"Unfortunately, even the safest campuses have external factors that can cause a minor incident. An unknown troubled soul threw a very large rock through the glass door of a school/church building on campus [last Monday]," she said.

Dunn said fortunately, one of the school's teachers was there within seconds to assure nothing more than the door was vandalized.

"We are thankful that the Department of Public Safety quickly responded and made a report. As always, SCS prioritizes safety for our community day and night. We are praying for the safety of our entire community in these difficult times. Together we are better, 6 feet apart," she said.

According to Department of Public Safety spokesperson Dre Pangelinan, the case remains under investigation and the suspect has yet to be identified.

Pangelinan said the search continues, with the little amount of information they have on the suspect who was described as 5'6", a little muscular, in dark clothing, and had slightly long hair.

SCS prides itself in being one of the first schools on island to complete the implementation of required guidelines to be approved to resume on-campus courses.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Shards of broken glass litter the floor of Saipan Community School and church's ministry center after a burglar tried to break in by smashing its glass door Monday.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
The Saipan Community School and church's ministry center's broken glass door after a burglar threw a large rock through it last Monday.

"Thanks to the tireless work of the faculty, staff, and board who, with great innovation, created a safe way for our students to resume on campus learning," said Dunn.

However, the campus had to close its door to face-to-face learning following the recent directive from Gov. Ralph DLG Torres stopping all in-person learning as they control the community spread of COVID-19 and as a precautionary measure to keep all CNMI students safe.

"The past three and half months we at SCS have meticulously planned how to create a safe learning environment for your children. We worked beyond our paid contracts and sacrificed our time to ensure the best results. We were highly commended for our plan, policies, and procedures that were strictly implemented, and for the modifications that were made to our campus prioritizing distancing, hand washing, and hygiene. For these reasons I am so very sorry to announce that SCS will not be able to meet for face-to-face classes starting August 24th due to the Governor's 8/21 Reimplementation of Restrictions," Dunn wrote in a previous email to parents.

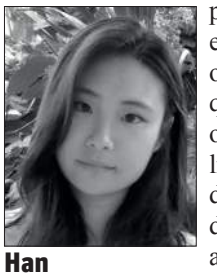
NMC nursing graduates pass NCLEX-RN Exam

Northern Marianas College graduates Ruby Belingon, Allanah Fernandez, Ronnel Ringor, and Han Byeol Pak have joined the list of students who have passed the challenging National Council Licensure Examination for Registered Nurses or NCLEX-RN.

Belingon

Fernandez

Ringor


Han

The NCLEX-RN tests an individual's nursing knowledge, skills and abilities essential to the safe and effective practice of nursing at the entry level. The exam is used by nursing boards in all U.S. states and territories to award nursing licenses.

"I want to congratulate Ruby, Allanah, Ronnel, and Han Byeol on becoming the latest graduates to reach this important milestone of passing the NCLEX-RN," NMC interim President Frankie Eliptico said.

NMC Nursing Department chair Rosa T. Aldan said that Ruby, Allanah, Ronnel, and Han Byeol have all worked very hard in studying and preparing themselves to pass the NCLEX-RN exam.

"I applaud them for their efforts and dedication and we are very proud of their recent accomplishments," Aldan said. "I have no doubt that they will do their very best for the people in our community."

Belingon said her brother, who is on the autism spectrum, is her primary motivation for pursuing a nursing degree.

"It was a no brainer decision for me," Belingon said. "I understood the complex care needs that he may potentially face with this disability, and worked my way towards that mindset."

For Pak, her motivation is her older sister, who is also a registered nurse.

"It is rewarding to be able to help people with the knowledge I learned from NMC's nursing program," Pak said.

Fernandez said that NMC's nursing program played a big role in helping her prepare for the NCLEX.

"NMC's nursing program provided our cohort with Kaplan, a program that provided us with thousands of NCLEX style questions to practice on and a week-long live review," Fernandez said. "It helped us develop strategies on answering NCLEX questions."

For Ringor, his advice to students planning to take the NCLEX is to have a strict study plan and to stick to it.

"Find a colleague who has the same goals as you and motivate each other to study," Ringor said.

For more information about NMC's nursing program, email NMC Nursing Department chair Rosa T. Aldan at rosa.aldan@marianas.edu or schedule a virtual appointment at rosaaldan.youcanbook.me. ***(PR)***

FOR FY '21 GOVT OPERATIONS

$62M in Compact funding for FSM OK'd

WASHINGTON—The bilateral Joint Economic Management Committee (JEMCO) of the United States (U.S.) and the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) concluded its annual meeting and approved a total of $62,968,281 in Compact of Free Association (Compact) funding for fiscal year 2021 for the FSM. The JEMCO annual meeting is required under U.S. Public Law 108-188, where its members review budgetary spending proposed by the FSM government and allocate funding, primarily directed towards the health and education sectors in the FSM, as agreed to under the Compact.

"Our JEMCO meeting went very well and the U.S.-FSM relationship remains strong despite the current travel restrictions imposed by the coronavirus pandemic, and I commend the FSM for its successful efforts to keep COVID-19 from reaching its people," said JEMCO Chairman Nikolao Pula. "We recognize that Compact funding will be increasingly critical in light of current circumstances and that it continues to provide fiscal stability and support to the FSM government, particularly in the health and education sectors."

"The successful completion of the recently held JEMCO meeting between the FSM and the United States is a validation of the commitment and understanding which underpins the on-going efforts by both countries to strengthen the bilateral relationship and the historical bonds that have existed throughout the years," said FSM Ambassador to the United States Akillino Susaia. "The FSM continues to acknowledge and appreciate the financial assistance from the U.S. through the Compact sector grants which helps underwrite FSM's ability to provide the essential government services to its people."

"Education and health are two of the most vital sectors for any country especially during these trying times. The U.S. Government is proud to continue to support the programs and initiatives of the Federated States of Micronesia and to reaffirm our enduring and special partnership," said U.S. Ambassador to the FSM Carmen G. Cantor.

The JEMCO allocated $62,968,281 in fiscal year 2021 Compact of Free Association sector grant assistance to the following sectors:

- $27,445,045 Education
- $23,855,094 Health
- $8,339,225 Infrastructure
- $1,557,090 Enhanced Reporting and Accountability
- $1,318,257 Public Sector Capacity Building
- $175,000 Private Sector Development
- $278,570 Environment
- $62,968,281 Total

JEMCO further resolved that the use of Infrastructure Sector assistance would be authorized for the Pohnpei Utilities Corporation Water Treatment Plant in Pohnpei and the Agriculture Station Facility in Kosrae. The JEMCO also came to an understanding that an additional $15,850,855 of fiscal year 2021 Compact assistance, above and beyond the $8.3 million approved, would remain available for possible infrastructure projects in the FSM for fiscal year 2021.

In his opening remarks, Chairman Pula expressed condolences on behalf of the JEMCO to the FSM families residing in the United States who have had members pass away as a result of COVID-19. Chairman Pula also acknowledged U.S. member Bill Gallo of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention who is retiring from the federal government and whose participation in this meeting represented his last. ***(PR)***

A longer version of this story is available at www. saipantribune.com

USCIS

From Page 1

after two renewals of the CW-1 visa classification.

USCIS also reiterated that CW-1 long-term workers, as defined in the interim final rule (IFR), are exempted from the departure requirement, which is also known as the "touchback rule."

In response to *Saipan Tribune*'s request for comments, Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan (Ind-MP), said the USCIS modification to the CW-1 departure requirement is good news for employers and of third country national employees.

"This modification is, as a matter of fact, the right interpretation of the Northern Marianas Workforce Act," Sablan said.

The delegate said they knew in the drafting of the legislation that it is inconceivable for the Workforce Act to require the majority of workers to depart at almost the same time.

"It would be harmful to the Marianas economy. That would have been the result of the USCIS earlier rule," Sablan said.

At yesterday's House of Representatives' regular session, Rep. Ralph Yumul (R-Saipan), who chairs the House Special Committee on Federal Assistance and Disaster Related Funding, said the modification of USCIS' policy pushing back the touchback provision for additional two years is "great news for a lot of small businesses here in the CNMI."

Yumul said the employers can still be able to process the CW-1 petitions and contract workers will not have to depart and they remain in the CNMI for additional two years.

Yumul said it's great news as it brings a sense of security for a lot of businesses.

The lawmaker is thankful to Sablan for pushing that modification.

House Federal and Foreign Affairs chair Rep. Luis John Castro (Ind-Saipan) said his committee worked together with Sablan in addressing the touchback matter.

"We get some correspondence in regards to this matter," Castro said.

In modifying its policy, effective immediately, USCIS will only consider CW-1 petitions approved on or after June 18, 2020, when they apply the requirement that certain CW-1 nonimmigrant workers depart the CNMI for a period of at least 30 continuous days.

USCIS cited an example that any alien approved on or after June 18, 2020, for a one-year CW-1 validity period beginning Oct. 1, 2020, will be eligible for two more consecutive petition validity periods after the first period of validity expires on Sept. 30, 2021.

Previously, USCIS counted all consecutive petition validity periods, even those approved prior to June 18, 2020, when determining which CW-1 nonimmigrant workers are subject to the temporary departure requirement.

USCIS said although the DHS stated in the IFR that the Workforce Act is "best read" to include pre-enactment renewals, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) also believes this is not the only permissible reading of the Workforce Act or the IFR.

"Through this announcement, DHS will implement the temporary departure requirement in a manner that best protects the interests of CW-1 employers and workers who may be affected by potential travel disruptions and delays beyond their control," USCIS said.

This change, USCIS said, also minimizes the likely negative impact on other U.S. businesses and prevents further damage to the CNMI economy.

On May 14, 2020, DHS published the IFR implementing the NMI U.S. Workforce Act of 2018.

The Workforce Act required DHS to promulgate an IFR to amend its regulations governing the CW-1 program to implement the statutory changes provided by the Workforce Act.

The IFR took effect last June 18.

The Workforce Act required that following expiration of the second CW-1 renewal period, an alien may not again be eligible for CW-1 status until after the alien has remained outside of the U.S. for a continuous period of at least 30 days after the submission of a renewal petition on their behalf.

Sablan said he and chairwoman Sen. Lisa Murkowski, chairman Rep. Raul Grijalva, and ranking member Rep. Rob Bishop wrote to USCIS explaining their reasons in disagreement with the original rule.

He said it is good news that USCIS modified their rule.

Sablan said the departure requirement is a suggestion that came from the Marianas congressional office.

"This is important since although we understand there may still be a need for non-U.S. workers, there is an even greater need to get U.S. workers placed in jobs here at home," he said.

Sablan said the departure requirement provides a 30-day pause in each worker visa issued under the CW-1 program.

"It gives our U.S. workers a real opportunity to apply and qualify for the jobs presently occupied by CW-1s," he said.

Sablan is thankful to the officials and career staffs at USCIS for this decision.

"It is always difficult to influence agency rulemaking. But I am very pleased that we had an influence on a rule that benefits everyone in the Northern Marianas," he added.

ROTA

From Page 1

During a verdict hearing yesterday before U.S District court for the NMI Chief Judge Ramona Manglona, the men and women of the jury entered their verdict, unanimously acquitting the Atalig of all counts against them, one count of conspiracy to commit wire fraud, wire fraud, and two counts of false statement.

After two weeks of trial, at 2:40pm, Manglona discharged Efraim and Evelyn Atalig and all terms that were imposed on them were exonerated.

Saipan Tribune asked Efraim Atalig for a statement following the court's decision, but he said he did not want to comment.

David Banes, the court-appointed counsel for Efraim Atalig, said it was not an easy case but the jury took their deliberations seriously and he feels justice was rendered to his client.

"We want to thank the ladies and gentlemen of the jury. It was not an easy case. We were there for too long weeks. And they obviously took their deliberations very seriously. They reviewed the evidence, they were asking for evidence, and we feel that they rendered justice here, felt that they really did do justice by the mayor and miss Evelyn. We sincerely thank them all," he said.

Steven Pixley, who served as counsel for Evelyn Atalig, said his client is now free and this case is completely over for both the Ataligs since they no longer have any charges filed against them with the local court.

"You know, we went up against up two very good lawyers, great lawyers. We provided the federal government all the resources but justice was done. The client was released, he's going to fly away into the jungle and be free. Its over here, he's a free bird," he said.

According to *Saipan Tribune* archives, the Ataligs were being charged with conspiracy to commit wire fraud, wire fraud, and false statement.

The prosecution alleged that the Ataligs went to a lot of CNMI-funded trips in 2018 with the primary if not only purpose was personal and not official.

The prosecution cited eight trips taken by the Ataligs at different times in 2018 to Guam, Palau, the U.S. mainland, South Korea, and Saipan.

GUAM

From Page 1

utes apart from each other. She said on a live video that the ninth death was a 62-year-old female who had underlying health conditions. The 62-year-old was a registered nurse who worked in the Intensive Care Unit and the Emergency Room at the Guam Memorial Hospital.

"She was also a registered nurse and a colleague, who worked in the ICU and ER at GMH for most of her career and dedicated her life to helping patients in our community," said Leon Guerrero.

While the eighth death is a 61-year-old male who was transferred from Guam Regional Medical City to GMH after testing positive for COVID-19 last Aug. 14. Leon Guerrero said that he had existing comorbidities, which intensified because if COVID-19.

"Reporting deaths is never easy, and these recent passing, which happened only 5 minutes apart, have been especially difficult. These two people were more than just COVID-19 patients—they had families, friends, and loved ones. I know words are not always enough, but to the people they loved, Jeff, Lt. Gov. Josh, and I extend our condolences and our sympathies," said Leon Guerrero.

Leon Guerrero stated that her No. 1 priority, as governor, is the health and safety for her people. She urges people to stay home to protect each other, and the community. "As a nurse, a mother, and a grandmother, I am appealing to your sense of love and compassion for family and our island. I cannot protect them alone—I need your help," said Leon Guerrero. "To the loved ones of these individuals, I offer you my sincerest condolences and my deepest sympathies."

The 62-year-old female was the second healthcare worker in Guam to have passed away from the virus. The other one was another GMH nursing assistant who had passed away last April 2020.

As Guam saw another 77 positives for COVID-19 last Aug. 25, Leon Guerrero announced that the lockdown that was expected to be lifted by Aug. 29 at noon, will be extended beyond Aug. 29.

TAX

From Page 1

direct deposit on their 1040CM tax return will receive this refund in their designated bank accounts. The Division of Revenue and Taxation (DRT) continues to process tax returns that claim the ACTC to get these funds out as quickly as possible.

DRT has seen an increase in error flags for the ACTC, due to many taxpayers improperly claiming dependents. Tax returns that have been amended multiple times due to corrections to number of dependents have been held for further review and audit. These amendments were mostly related to the issuance of the Economic Impact Payments, better known as the "stimulus checks."

"The Division of Revenue and Taxation is working diligently to process all tax returns as they are received so that these taxpayers will be included in the subsequent check releases," said Atalig.

All taxpayers are asked to allow two weeks' time for time for the U.S. Postal Service to sort and distribute mail. ***(PR)***

Biton hosts Fit-Beach Coastal Cleanup

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Miss Earth NMI candidate Julia Biton and volunteers pose with bags of trash they collected in last Aug. 16's Fit-Beach Coastal Cleanup.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Miss Earth NMI candidate Julia Biton before the cleanup.

TINIAN—Due to COVID-19 and our current situation with the pandemic, it has caused a lot of setbacks and redirection in our everyday lives.

However, that did not stop Miss Earth NMI candidate Julia Biton from putting her advocacy into action and expressing her love toward our environment.

Her advocacy is to share the benefits of recycling, spread awareness of global warming, and lead the youth of the Mariana Islands to the importance of environmental awareness.

Last Aug. 16, Biton hosted her own Fit-Beach Coastal Cleanup, in partnership with the Anti-Tobacco Program. The cleanup started at Taga Beach and participants walked along the shoreline and sidewalks to collect trash and debris. Participants of the cleanup were given a free T-shirt, as well as reusable shopping bags provided by Karl Nabors.

Volunteers came out in droves for the cleanup.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

"As a candidate for Miss Earth NMI, I want to start putting my advocacy into action and show the people that I am doing this not only for the title, but for the better of our environment and our community," stated Biton.

During the cleanup, the participants were always reminded to wear face coverings and maintain social distancing, to make sure everyone stayed safe. While maintaining social distancing, everyone seemed to enjoy the activity and help the environment at the same time.

Despite the pandemic, Biton wants to continue leading her community and spreading awareness, positivity, and love toward the protection of our Earth, even if it has to be at home and through social media because of the new implemented restrictions and curfew.

Furthermore, Biton would like to thank everyone who participated in the event, the Tinian Mayor's Office, the Anti-Tobacco Program, Mr. and Mrs. Allen Perez, Karl Nabors, Patrick San Nicolas, JC Café, and to others who donated and assisted with the preparation to make her coastal cleanup such a successful event.

"I want to remind everyone that even during the pandemic, there are many ways we can protect Mother Earth, even at our own homes. This pandemic should not stop you, because it will definitely not stop me from creating a beautiful place for us and our future generations to grow," said Biton. ***(PR)***

PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
CNMI GOVERNMENT

INVITATION TO BID
ITB NO.: ITB20-OGM-113

SUBMISSION DATE: SEPTEMBER 28, 2020 TIME: 09:00 A.M.

"PURCHASE OF ONE (1) CLASS "F" PICK-UP TRUCK 4WD/FOUR-FULL-DOORS THE OFFICE OF GRANTS MANAGEMENT & STATE CLEARING HOUSE"

COPIES OF THE SPECIFICATIONS MAY BE OBTAINED AT THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF PROCUREMENT & SUPPLY, LOCATED AT THE FORMER EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT OFFICE, ASCENCION DRIVE, BUILDING NO. 1301, CAPITOL HILL, SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

****MUST USE A FACE MASK BEFORE ENTERING THE OFFICE****

THE PROVISIONS OF THE CNMI PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS, NMIAC SECTION 70-30.3-725 AND 70-30.3-730 PROHIBITING GRATUITIES, KICKBACKS AND CONTINGENT FEES SHALL APPLY.

THE CNMI GOVERNMENT RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS, OR PORTIONS THEREOF, AND WAIVE IMMATERIAL DEFECTS IF TO DO SO WOULD BE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE CNMI GOVERNMENT.

/S/ EPIPHANIO E. CABRERA, JR
ADMINISTRATOR, OFFICE OF GRANTS

/S/ FRANCISCO C. AGUON
ACTING DIRECTOR, P&S

COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY

PROJECT NO. CPA-RFP-007-2020

FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE ECHO DOCK AT THE PORT OF SAIPAN

The Commonwealth Ports Authority (Authority) is inviting qualified developers and their development teams to submit sealed proposal, subject to the terms and conditions of this Request for Proposal (the "RFP"), and other contract provisions, for the Development of the Echo Dock situated north of the Port of Saipan. The Executive Director hereby determines that the use of an Invitation for Bid is neither practical nor advantageous to the Authority because the Authority wishes to acquire services and products that cannot be evaluate by cost alone (NMIAC §40-50-225(a)). This RFP is issued pursuant to Chapter 40-50 of the Northern Mariana Islands Administrative Code (the "NMIC"). Title 40, including chapter 40-50-225, Request for Proposals, is applicable to the process followed by the RFP.

The RFP Package is available beginning August 27, 2020, at the Authority's Accounting Office, 2nd Floor, Departure Terminal Building, Saipan International Airport upon payment of an administrative fee of $200.00 payable to the "Commonwealth Ports Authority".

The Authority will hold a briefing for interested parties at 10:00 a.m. on September 16, 2020, to explain the Authority's development objectives, the RFP process, and to answer questions. The meeting will be held at the Authority's Seaport Conference Room, George Fleming Building. All potential applicants are encouraged to attend. All proposers are requested to pay attention to the following significant dates and times:

Deadline to submit Notice of Intent	September 28, 2020 (4:00 PM)
Deadline to submit Statement of Qualifications	October 13, 2020 (4:00 PM)
Notification of qualified applicants of the RFP	October 28, 2020
Deadline for RFP submission	November 30, 2020 (4:00 PM)

Qualified proposers shall submit their proposals sealed and marked on the cover package outside as follows: "Proposal for the Development of the Echo Dock, Saipan (RFP-007-20). Five (5) hard copies and one CD of the proposal must be submitted no later than ***4:00 p.m. Local Time, November 30, 2020***, to the Office of the Executive Director at the Saipan International Airport. Proposals submitted by facsimile (fax) transmission will not be considered. Any proposals received after the proposal submittal deadline shall be returned to the proposer unopened.

The Commonwealth Ports Authority (CPA) reserves the right to reject any or all proposals submitted if sufficient justification exist that awarding the project would not be in the best interest of the CPA.

FOR THE COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY.

/s/ CHRISTOPHER S. TENORIO Date:_____
Executive Director

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS
CNMI GOVERNMENT

INVITATION TO BID
ITB NO.: DPW20-ITB-022

SUBMISSION DATE: October 15, 2020 TIME: 10:00 A.M.

"Route 36 (Windward/Chalan Kalabera) Road Improvements Project No. CM-NH-0036 (004), Phase 1, Saipan"

COPIES OF THE SPECIFICATIONS MAY BE OBTAINED AT THE TECHNICAL SERVICES DIVISION, DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS, LOCATED ON SECOND FLOOR, OLEAI JOETEN COMMERCIAL CENTER, SAN JOSE, SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

THE PROVISIONS OF THE CNMI PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS, NMIAC SECTION 70-30.3-725 AND 70-30.3-730 PROHIBITING GRATUITIES, KICKBACKS AND CONTINGENT FEES SHALL APPLY.

The project package will be available on or after **August 13, 2020** at Technical Services Division, Department of Public Works, located on Second Floor, Oleai Joeten Commercial Center, San Jose, Saipan.

There will be a Pre-bid Conference for this project on **September 2, 2020**, 9:00 a.m. local time at the Department of Public Works Conference Room 2nd Floor, Oleai Joeten Commercial Center Office, Saipan. The Prospective bidders are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the site. All question regarding this project must be submitted in writing no later than 4:30 p.m. local time on **September 24, 2020** to **Mr. Anthony A. Camacho, Director of Technical Services Division**, 2nd Floor, Oleai Joeten Commercial Center, Saipan or fax to (670) 234-3547. Response to questions shall be shared with prospective bidders.

THE CNMI GOVERNMENT RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS, OR PORTIONS THEREOF, AND WAIVE IMMATERIAL DEFECTS IF TO DO SO WOULD BE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE CNMI GOVERNMENT.

/S/ JAMES A. ADA
SECRETARY, DPW

/S/ FRANCISCO C. AGUON
ACTING DIRECTOR, P&S

PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
CNMI GOVERNMENT

REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS
RF1Q NO.: RFQ20-DOF-112

SUBMISSION DATE: SEPTEMBER 10, 2020 TIME: 09:30 A.M.

"PROJECT MANAGEMENT SERVICES FOR THE CNMI GOVERNMENT ENTERPRISE RESOURCE PLANNING (ERP) SYSTEM IMPLEMENTATION FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE"

COPIES OF THE SPECIFICATIONS MAY BE OBTAINED AT THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF PROCUREMENT & SUPPLY, LOCATED AT THE FORMER EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT OFFICE, ASCENCION DRIVE, BUILDING NO. 1301, CAPITOL HILL, SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS OR BY VISITING RFP.DOF.GOV.MP.

****MUST USE A FACE MASK BEFORE ENTERING THE OFFICE****

QUESTIONS REGARDING THIS RFQ MUST BE SUBMITTED IN WRITING TO rfq@dof.gov.mp OR FACSIMILE TO (670) 664-1115 **NO LATER THAN THE CLOSE OF BUSINESS, SEPTEMBER 04, 2020**. ALL QUESTIONS & ANSWERS WILL BE SHARED WITH ALL PROPOSERS.

THE PROVISIONS OF THE CNMI PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS, NMIAC SECTION 70-30.3-725 AND 70-30.3-730 PROHIBITING GRATUITIES, KICKBACKS AND CONTINGENT FEES SHALL APPLY.

THE CNMI GOVERNMENT RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS, OR PORTIONS THEREOF, AND WAIVE IMMATERIAL DEFECTS IF TO DO SO WOULD BE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE CNMI GOVERNMENT.

/S/ DAVID DLG. ATALIG
SECRETARY OF FINANCE

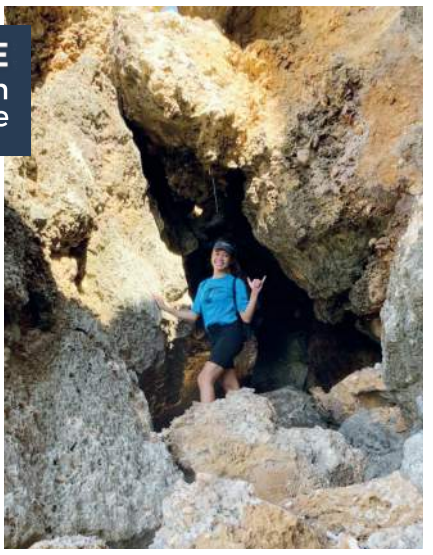
/S/ FRANCISCO C. AGUON
ACTING DIRECTOR, P&S

A COLLECTION OF ARTICLES WRITTEN BY THE DCRM SUMMER INTERNS OF 2020

FROM RIDGE TO REEF

MARIA TERLAJE
2020 Summer Intern
DCRM Micronesia Challenge

PRESERVING CULTURE THROUGH ENVIRONMENTAL OUTREACH



"This is a sentiment I consistently voiced, embedding knowledge and passion throughout this internship. This summer, I had the opportunity to work as an intern for the Micronesia Challenge (MC) at the CNMI Division of Coastal Resources Management (DCRM). Under the leadership of DCRM Director, Janice Castro, and in collaboration with Pheona David, the MC Young Champion, I was assigned to create education and outreach materials that would inspire our community to come together to achieve the MC goal - to effectively conserve 30% of near-shore marine resources and 20% of terrestrial resources by 2020.

As residents of the Marianas, we each have an obligation to conserve our land and sea for the prosperity of future generations and preservation of our culture. In Conservation Education and Outreach, Susan Jacobson defines outreach as an opportunity to celebrate the importance of environmental value through education (Jacobson et al.,117). In the CNMI, education and outreach are critical for youth and local community involvement. This is validated by DCRM and the overall success of their internship program. In addition, outreach initiatives targeted to tourists and visitors are important if we want them to continue to enjoy our beautiful land and sea.

This summer, I was fortunate to be able to exercise my passion to inspire through education and outreach. I helped to identify target audiences and develop and create outreach materials that highlight the goals of the MC and CNMI's progress towards that goal. I had the opportunity to design a new logo – half-tree, half-coral - symbolizing the connection between our land and sea. I also developed a fact sheet that detailed CNMI's strategies to conserve the Marianas' natural resources, while identifying next steps moving towards 2030 and the Micronesia Challenge Plus. The projects were work but were also exciting. I gained a wealth of knowledge on the importance of the Mariana's natural resources and I am even more inspired to continue to learn, advocate and work towards the betterment of our environment.

RICHELLE RAMON
2020 Summer Intern
DCRM Marine Monitoring Team

"Over time, our ocean has undergone many changes..."

FISHING FOR MARINE LIFE OR NO LIFE?

We love our fish straight from the ocean. And where do our fish reside? Our reefs. Overtime, our ocean has undergone many changes especially from the effects of human activities, climate change, and natural disasters. Our reefs are essential as they play an important role in providing shelter to marine life, food and protection from storm surge and wave energy.

As a summer intern under the Division of Coastal Resources Management's Marine Monitoring Team, I have gained hands-on experience through monitoring our lagoon and reef flats'. The necessary tools needed to accomplish lagoon surveys include a GPS device, five transect lines that measure up to 50 meters, data sheets to quantify benthic substrate and invertebrates, quadrats, cameras, and snorkeling gear. Regarding a benthic survey, each transect line is laid out 50m, a quadrat (counting 6 points) is placed at each meter along the transect, to observe what is present at each point in terms of coral species, seagrass, and algae. Regarding an invertebrate survey, the number of invertebrate species is counted along the transect lines. These actions are taken to inform on the well-being of our ocean and its quality as it affects our reefs, or marine life, in general.

During my time in this internship, I have observed the vulnerability of our dying reefs and seagrass beds, as well as the declining population of fish species in our lagoon. Some key contributors include 1) illegal littering, which eventually finds its way into our oceans and become marine debris, 2) the occurrence of typhoons and heavy rains, which can cause sediment runoff to smother and break our coral reefs, and 3) climate change, which causes coral bleaching and sea level rise. As many people on island rely heavily on our ocean as a food source, our community must work together to help our oceans such as cleaning up after themselves and disposing trash properly in order to prevent it from washing into our ocean.

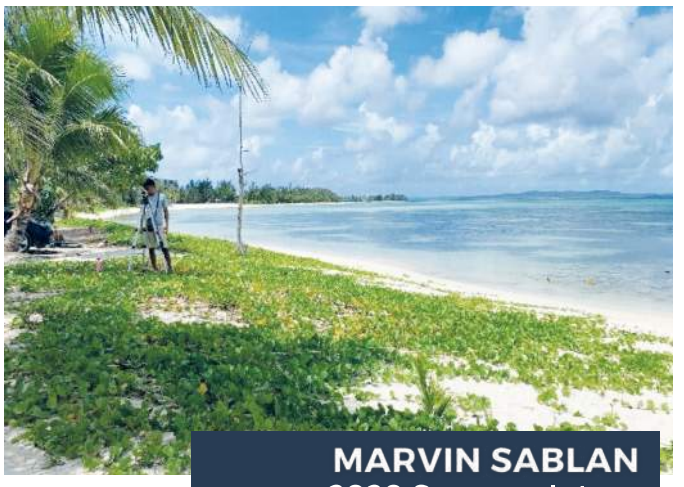
The opportunity to work as a Marine Monitoring intern has given me the knowledge and skills needed to approach the needs of our ocean and has reaffirmed my decision to pursue a degree and career in Marine Biology. I am extremely grateful to be a part of this year's cohort as I've learned many new things, met new people, and went on great adventures throughout the summer. I look forward to returning next summer as a second-year intern.

FOR PROGRAM INFORMATION AND HOW TO APPLY FOR THE 2021 COHORT VISIT WWW.DCRM.GOV.MP
@CNMIDCRM @GOINGCOASTAL_CNMI

A COLLECTION OF ARTICLES WRITTEN BY THE DCRM SUMMER INTERNS OF 2020

FROM RIDGE TO REEF

"I've heard many rumors over time that Saipan is sinking..."



MARVIN SABLAN
2020 Summer Intern
DCRM Micronesia Challenge

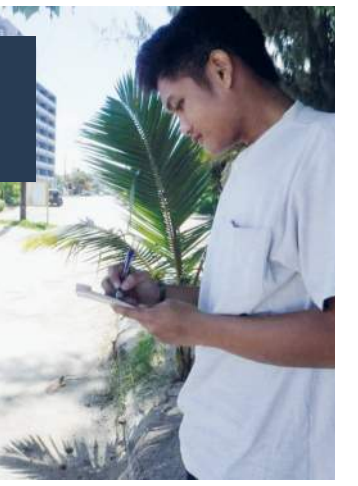
SAIPAN IS SINKING ...or is it?

Is it possible that this prediction could be true or false? Shoreline profile monitoring is a way of observing and measuring the changes of a beach, overtime, to determine if that beach is eroding (losing sand) or accreting (gaining sand). This summer I had the opportunity to work under the Shoreline Monitoring Program, led by DCRM's Coastal Planner, Mary Urena.

I, along with two other interns, have been important in gathering shoreline data at various beaches in Saipan. One person uses the tripod and a Berger level to which they place on a flat surface to take sight of the level rod. The other person who holds the rod places a transect line along the beach profile before holding the level rod. The third person does the note taking as the person who is sighting reads the measurement from the level rod and informs the note taker as to what measurement he reads. Measurements from the transect line are measured every 10 ft, depending whether there are features to capture such as berms, roads, vegetation, wrack lines or water lines and these are captured every ft.

The data we gather is to inform the public about the changes of the shorelines every year. I've been living on this island for 22 years and I never knew which beaches were losing sand or gaining sand until entering the shoreline monitoring team. "In some parts of the world, shoreline hardening as a response to erosion reflects a coastal management model of action-reaction, compounded by the challenge of teasing out the natural causes of erosion. "(Luis Martinez, 2018.) DCRM considers this statement and prefers living shorelines to address erosion. On top of shoreline monitoring, I have been working on the public shoreline access guide. This project was created in 2015 and it must be updated every 5 years. This guide aims to provide the public information regarding the recreational opportunities available at the various beaches. During my observation for each of the beaches on the island, I've noticed that due to damage from super typhoons, Soudelor and Yutu, changes have been made to some of our beaches. For example, new palapalas have been built and new trash receptacles placed. Overall, this has been a great learning experience for me and most of all it is fun!

"While out on the field, you never know what you will encounter"



JEFF SAGUM
2020 Summer Intern
DCRM Enforcement

TO PROTECT AND PRESERVE

Being an intern under the Division of Coastal Resources Management (DCRM) Enforcement section is a completely different experience compared to interns from other sections. While out on the field, you never know what you will encounter - whether it's having to justify your work duties to an upset fisherman or nearly losing a UAS drone's wing, the list could go on. Nevertheless, being an intern under the Enforcement section was an unforgettable experience.

While working under the Enforcement section, I was tasked with two main projects. My first project was to create a reference map of the dive sites within the CNMI. The purpose of this project was to provide DCRM with a quick reference to these dive sites. In identifying the coordinates of the dive sites, I researched and converted the coordinates provided. Some of the dive sites coordinates were based on the installations of mooring buoys. Once coordinates were identified, I then plotted them on Google Earth to produce a reference map. With this map, Enforcement has an easier and quicker access (either digitally or hard copy) in identifying the different dive sites within the CNMI.

My second project was to create outreach material for the Marine Sports Operators (MSO) permitted under DCRM. Outreach materials should reflect MSO permit conditions to ensure compliance with the agency's regulations. The first step was to research all standard and mandatory permit conditions. I then decided on two types of outreach materials: a durable magnet and a water-resistant poster that will be distributed to the various companies permitted or applying for permits under DCRM. My goal in creating these specific materials was to develop a quick and easy reference guide for MSO operators to ensure they're always in regulatory compliance. In regards to what an intern does under the Enforcement section regularly, much of it includes conducting routine inspections of projects and activities located within an Area of Particular Concern, Major Siting Projects, and MSO compliance.. If any of the projects or activities are in violation of their permit conditions or DCRM's regulations, a Notice of Violation is issued with corrective measures to be adhered to. In cases of recurring violations, a Notice of Violation can lead to a Notice of Enforcement, wherein monetary fines are issued. It is Enforcement's responsibility to ensure projects and companies are in compliance with DCRM's rules and regulations.

The role Enforcement plays in any community is important. According to research done in Komodo, "seamless monitoring and enforcement" helped to lessen fishing pressure on an Indonesian marine protected area, which helped to restore an important, but threatened, species of fish. In the end, rules, regulations, and effective enforcement, are there to help protect our environment, our resources, and the people of the CNMI.

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Opinion

Hafa Adai!
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EDITORIAL

Sorry, Mr. President. There's no miracle cure for COVID-19

Like the scientists working to develop COVID-19 treatments and vaccines, President Donald Trump desperately wants to announce a cure that will signal the beginning of the end of the pandemic that has killed more than 177,000 Americans.

Unlike the scientists, however, the president isn't content to wait until there is actual proof of a cure to make that announcement.

On Sunday, Trump held a televised press conference to personally give Americans the good news about a "historic breakthrough" for treating COVID-19 infections that is "safe" and "will save countless lives." The breakthrough in question? An experimental treatment in which blood plasma from people who have recovered from the coronavirus is injected into those who are sick, thus transferring protective antibodies.

The treatment does hold some promise, but scientists are skeptical that it is truly a breakthrough. One study by the Mayo Clinic sponsored by the National Institutes of Health found that COVID-19 patients who received plasma therapy within three days of diagnosis showed a statistically significant, if still small, improvement of mortality over patients who received it later in the infection.

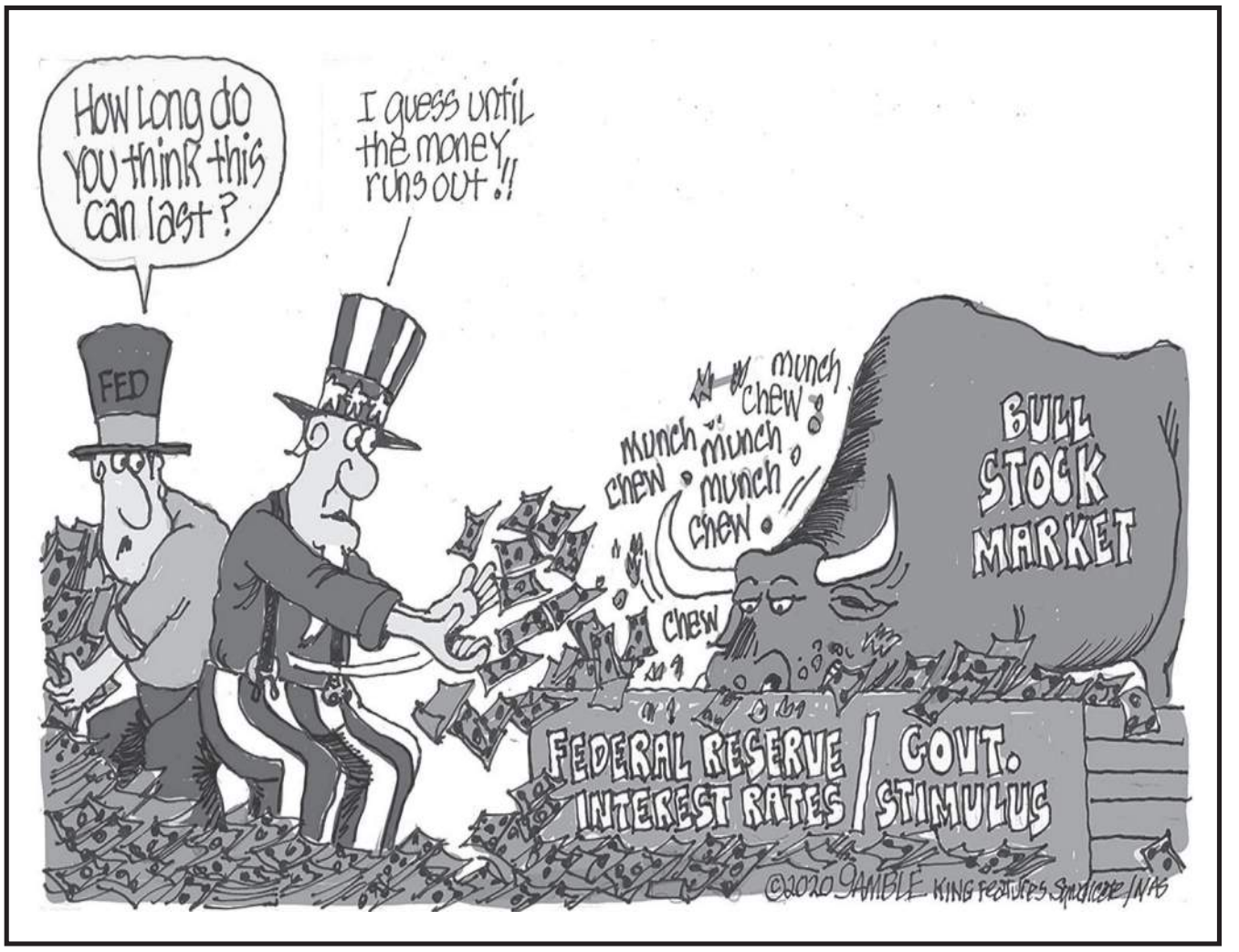
But the study did not have a control group of patients who received a placebo, and it has not been peer-reviewed. For those reasons, top health officials, including Dr. Anthony Fauci, head of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, urged the Food and Drug Administration not to give it emergency approval. Nevertheless, the FDA did exactly that a day after Trump complained the "deep state" at the FDA was obstructing COVID-19 medicines to make him look bad, giving him something to crow about on the eve of the Republican National Convention.

Indeed it seems that even if the plasma therapy is as effective as the president says it will be, it may not be enough to stop the pandemic. On Monday, Hong Kong researchers reported the first documented case of someone who'd recovered from COVID-19 becoming infected again. That's dispiriting because it means that antibody treatments and vaccines may not provide lasting protection against infection.

Trump's zeal for a COVID-19 cure would be laudable if his motives weren't so nakedly self-serving and the results so problematic. When Trump decided that hydroxychloroquine, an anti-malarial drug, was a magic cure when paired with a powerful antibiotic, he would not stop talking about its promise, leading one hapless man to die after self medicating with chloroquine phosphate. The FDA gave hydroxychloroquine emergency approval as well, but pulled it later after risks of the drug began outweighing the potential benefits.

Thank goodness the FDA wasn't so reckless to humor the

See SORRY on Next Page



Poisoning of Alexei Navalny is a litmus test for Trump and Putin

By TRUDY RUBIN
The Philadelphia Inquirer

Trudy Rubin is a columnist and editorial-board member for the Philadelphia Inquirer. *Readers may write to her at:* Philadelphia Inquirer, *P.O. Box 8263, Philadelphia, Pa. 19101, or by email at trubin@phillynews.com.*

All who worry about the future of democracy in the Trump era should follow the story of Alexei Navalny, the latest Kremlin critic to be poisoned.

As Republican speakers toss around the words "freedom and democracy" at a reality-lite GOP convention, Russia's most prominent opposition leader lies in a coma, after evacuation from Siberia to a Berlin hospital. Trump has said nary a word about Navalny, in sharp contrast to Germany's Angela Merkel and France's Emmanuel Macron, who demanded answers from Russia.

Trump's silence is unsurprising, since he never criticizes Putin, despite a long list of murdered Kremlin critics. When asked in 2015 about the killing of many Russian journalists, Trump replied, "Well, I think that our country does plenty of killing, too." In other words, the GOP nominee believes American democracy is no different than a Kremlin kleptocracy.

But Navalny would beg to differ about democracy. He achieved remarkable success in building grassroots organizations across Russia -- which is why Putin fears him. His courage should inspire Americans daunted by Trump's threats to undermine the 2020 election. It puts the GOP to shame.

I last interviewed the dynamic, then 41-year-old Navalny in Moscow in March 2018, in his sleek modern office, staffed by casually dressed young Russians who typify his legions of followers.

I arrived there after visiting the volunteer memorial at the spot where the leading liberal opposition leader Boris Nemtsov was gunned down right under the Kremlin walls in 2015. It was an assassination that could not have happened without Kremlin approval, and the most blatant in an endless series of killings and poisonings of opposition figures at home and abroad.

Banned from state-controlled media, the former lawyer campaigned against Kremlin corruption on YouTube, the Telegram messaging service and other social media platforms. His group put together astonishing videos revealing official corruption, including former Russian president Dmitry Medvedev, the head of Russia's national guard, and other Kremlin favorites. The videos got millions of hits.

Banned from running in the last presidential election, or from forming a political party, Navalny was called a "fascist" and a "traitor" by Kremlin trolls. He was arrested, repeatedly jailed and physically attacked.

But he never faltered, shifting his goal to convincing Russians that rigged elections didn't mean their aspirations were fruitless. "We understood the basic decision of Putin is to be a lifetime president and die in the Kremlin like a tsar," he told me.

"These rigged percentages are leverage to persuade people everything is fruitless, that resistance is impossible." He tried to prove that wasn't the case.

Was he afraid of being murdered, I asked. "Right now the cost is higher than they want," he told me, adding with grim humor, "Maybe they are still saving this tool."

So why did the Kremlin target him now?

Probably because Putin is getting nervous. Beset by low oil prices and a stagnant economy, Russians in the boonies are getting restless.

Navalny had developed a "smart voting" system, urging dissatisfied Russians to vote for anyone but the Kremlin's United Russia party, rather than split their vote amongst the several toothless opposition parties permitted to run.

"Navalny started building networks all across the country, trying to build support at the municipal, district and regional level, building structures from the bottom up," I was told by Yevgenia Albats, a leading Russian journalist, and one of Russia's few remaining independent commentators. "This has never been done before in Russia."

The result could be seen in the far eastern city of Khabarovsk, where "smart voting" elected a governor not from the Kremlin party who was responsive to local needs. Clearly this made Putin unhappy. When the governor was suddenly arrested, tens of thousands came to the streets, and demonstrations continue.

With local elections upcoming in Russia, and parliamentary elections next year, Putin may well have feared that Navalny's "smart voting" would undermine Kremlin control of the country.

See POISONING on Next Page

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The false, lethal promise of 'warp speed' science

By MICHAEL HILTZIK
Los Angeles Times

Michael Hiltzik is a columnist for the Los Angeles Times.

President Donald Trump's approach to the coronavirus pandemic has been rooted from the start in grand goals and grander ambitions, all to be achieved with record speed.

His administration's funding of COVID-19 vaccines is dubbed "Operation Warp Speed." As recently as Sunday, he promoted research into convalescent plasma — blood fluid taken from patients who have recovered from the virus — as "years ahead of approvals."

He added, "If we went by the speed levels of past administration, (sic) we'd be two years, three years behind where we are today, and that includes in vaccines that you'll be hearing about very soon, very shortly."

Remarks like that "sends chills down everybody's spines," says Gregg Gonsalves, an expert on epidemiology at Yale medical school and Yale law school.

That's because Trump's rolling out a vaccine without adequate testing as an October surprise to aid his reelection would "set off a lot of confusion about whether it works," generating more vaccine skepticism among the public.

Trump's "magic bullet" approach to medicine reflects a common strain in the public's attitude toward the scientific method — the search for uncomplicated answers for what may be complex and intractable problems, and a demand for speed when safe and effective results take time.

Trump is not alone in seeing these problems that can be quickly solved if only money and willpower are brought to bear. Before Trump's Operation Warp Speed, there was the Obama administration's "Cancer Moonshot," and before that the Nixon administration's "War on Cancer."

Both programs did augment research funding — the Moonshot was provided with $1.8 billion over seven years and the War on Cancer (specifically, the National Cancer Act of 1971) was initially funded with $1.6 billion over three years — but obviously cancer hasn't been cured. The main reason may be that the task was far more complicated and the target more elusive than enthusiasts anticipated.

The first element of these programs that misleads laypersons about the prospects of success is the terminology.

"Warp speed" and "moonshot" evoke programs like the Manhattan Project, which produced the atomic bomb in a mere three years, and the space race, which in 1969 fulfilled John F. Kennedy's 1961 objective of placing a man on the moon and returning him to Earth by the end of that decade.

Both were essentially engineering challenges; there were few doubts that the challenges could be vanquished in time, given suitable infusions of funding and manpower.

The space race occurred "in an extraordinary time with an extraordinary amount of resources put into it to achieve a finite, physical goal," says Timothy Caulfield, an expert in health law and policy at the University of Alberta and a veteran debunker of scientific hokum. "That's an exception to the reality of how science normally plays out."

Biology is more complicated — perhaps infinitely so.

"In human biology often as you proceed with your research, as you think you're getting closer and closer to the finish line, you begin to discover it's more and more distant," says Leigh Turner, a bioethicist at the University of Minnesota. "You become increasingly aware of the complexity you're dealing with."

The thirst for quick and easy solutions to difficult tasks isn't limited to science. It's the part of human nature that makes us susceptible to the lure of programs that promise to teach us a foreign language via software, or train us to win friends and influence people by pumping the secrets of success at us through our pillow while we sleep.

Never mind that learning a new language can take years of painstaking study and that if you don't have charm by the time you reach adulthood, well, you'll probably never have it.

It's also what makes us vulnerable for anecdotal or even fraudulent claims for untested nostrums such as homeopathic remedies or stem cell treatments, especially when the curative claims are directed at desperate victims of intractable diseases.

Why wait for a treatment to undergo years of tests and trials, when an alternative is available today by mail order, bearing an endorsement from Dr. Oz or Gwyneth Paltrow?

The news media and social media are often defenseless against science hype, in part because it tends to be generated by the publicity offices of respected universities.

Caulfield in 2018 reported "an upswing in the use of hyperbolic discourse and spin in research publications," with "terms such as 'breakthrough,' 'game changer,' 'miracle,' 'cure,' 'home run' and 'revolutionary' common."

That's often enough to prompt journalists to park their inherent skepticism to the side of the road when reporting researchers' claims.

Indeed, several of those terms have been sprinkled through Trump's claims for the antimalarial drug hydroxychloroquine, which has been discredited as a treatment for COVID-19 despite his assiduous promotion.

Just this weekend, Trump touted convalescent plasma as a "very historic breakthrough" in the battle against COVID-19. That captured the public's attention, even though experts in the field tried to warn against the hyperbole.

> *"Warp speed" and "moonshot" evoke programs like the Manhattan Project, which produced the atomic bomb in a mere three years, and the space race, which in 1969 fulfilled John F. Kennedy's 1961 objective of placing a man on the moon and returning him to Earth by the end of that decade.*

Pressure on regulatory agencies to approve untested disease treatments or to short-circuit customary clinical trial process can be intense, especially when the need for treatment is desperate, as in the fight against COVID-19.

New drugs normally go through three rounds of trials. In Phase 1, a group of fewer than 100 healthy volunteers receives the drug to identify possible side effects. In Phase 2, a few hundred patients with the target condition are recruited for further assessment of side effects and efficacy, including possible dosing protocols.

Then comes Phase 3, in which as many as tens of thousands of subjects receive the drug to validate its effectiveness and risk in comparison with its effect on an equivalent group given a placebo, with the two groups administered the drug or placebo randomly. That's the gold standard of clinical testing.

The problem with cutting corners in clinical trials is that the results of each phase can be deceptive.

The FDA, in a report dated January 2017 and obviously prepared before Trump's inauguration, listed 22 cases in which new drugs were deemed promising in Phase 2 trials but failed in Phase 3.

They included 15 cases in which the drug turned out to be ineffective in treating the target disease, one in which the drug was deemed unsafe and six in which it was deemed both unsafe and ineffective. In the latter cases, the drug turned out to have side effects that hadn't been caught in the smaller Phase 2 trials.

The report was written to caution against what the FDA termed a "growing interest in exploring alternatives to requiring Phase 3 testing before product approval." It covered drugs that had been developed to treat heart conditions, diabetes, depression and the effects of HIV, among other ailments.

Hype has become an inextricable part of science because it can generate millions of dollars of support. Consider the 2004 campaign to pass Proposition 71, which created the $3-billion California stem cell program (known formally as the California Institute for Regenerative Medicine, or CIRM).

As I've reported before, the measure "was sold to a gullible public via candy-coated images of Christopher Reeve walking again and Michael J. Fox cured of Parkinson's."

The hype got the proposition passed, but CIRM has struggled ever since to live up to promises that it has been unable to deliver. That could be a burden this election season, when CIRM is seeking an additional $5.5 billion from voters and will have to explain why all the cures it predicted haven't materialized.

"That still might be a worthwhile public investment," Turner observes, adding that the research actually funded by CIRM has been conducted along responsible scientific lines. "But you have this disconnect between what's used to float the entire enterprise, and what the actual results are."

Biomedical "moonshots" and "wars" "are characterized as so important and promising that they should be treated differently by regulators and are sometimes tested in patients prematurely," says Paul Knoepfler, a stem cell biologist at UC Davis who keeps a careful eye on unwarranted claims for stem cell "cures" and signs of political pressure on regulators. "In fact, such experimental therapies are often not ready for prime time."

The siren call of easy medical fixes is both the product and the cause of our resistance to giving long-term resources to more effective programs, such as "investments in public health and preventive care," says Gonsalves.

"We know that 55,000 jobs in public health have been lost over the past decade," Gonsalves adds. "We've made long-term disinvestments in local and state public health which are coming back to bite us now. Social safety net programs have seen a slow death by a thousand cuts since the Eighties."

Because we're not even willing to invest in things we could afford to undertake — expanded testing, contract tracing of infected individuals, providing protective gear for healthcare personnel — "we're grasping for magic bullets like hydroxychloroquine and convalescent plasma."

The critical need for a remedy for COVID-19 demands more care, not more haste. What's most troubling about the variety of hype in science today is that in this time of crisis, it's being generated not by self-interested scientists, but self-interested politicians like Trump. Never has the need for good scientific research been more urgent, and never has it been under greater attack.

SORRY

From Page 8

president when he mused that it might be useful to test bleach injections or internal ultraviolet light as COVID-19 treatments. We shudder to think what Trump might cook up for an October surprise, such as a rushed vaccine that hasn't completed its third and most extensive phase of clinical trials.

We all want to find a cure for COVID-19 so life can return to something like normal. But if the credibility of the agency tasked with ensuring treatments are safe and effective continues to be eroded by Trump's manipulations, will Americans trust one if and when one comes along?

© 2020 *Los Angeles Times*

POISONING

From Page 8

Add to that the demonstrations in Belarus, which borders Russia, where tens of thousands are protesting against an election rigged by Europe's last dictator, Alexander Lukashenko. "Because Navalny is the only leader of the Russian opposition, they look at Minsk and see what Lukashenko did very successfully, totally eliminating leaders," says Albats.

Navalny's tea was apparently poisoned at a Siberian airport, having rallied followers in Tomsk. This was a kind of Russia-wide campaigning to reach the average Ivan that no other critic has dared to do.

"Of course he will go home if he wakes up," says Albats, "if the poison didn't destroy his brain."

But what should an American leader do? Albats notes that America's all-important "soft power" lies in the "illusion that the American people really care about freedom and liberty. Do you really care about Navalny?" she asks.

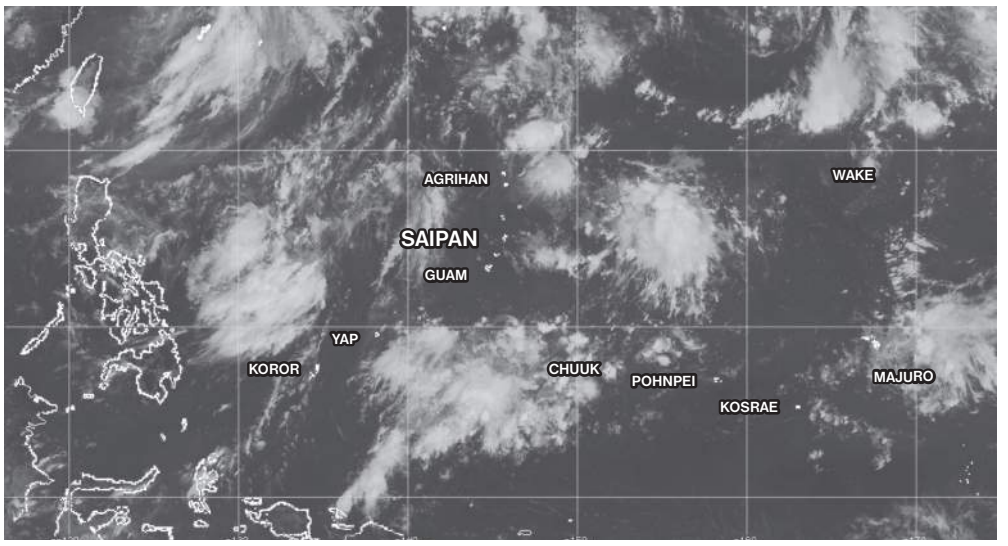
Unlike Trump, Joe Biden has decried Navalny's poisoning, and said he would "defend our democratic values and stand up to autocrats like Putin." At minimum, the president should publicly stand with Macron and Merkel in demanding answers from Putin about Navalny. That is, if he gives a whit about democracy, here or abroad.

The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN

TODAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY
Mostly cloudy with scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers. Isolated afternoon thunderstorms for Guam Saturday.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers. Isolated afternoon thunderstorms for Guam Saturday.	Mostly cloudy. Isolated showers and thunderstorms.	Mostly cloudy. Isolated showers and thunderstorms.
87° 77°	87° 78°	87° 76°	88° 78°	87° 77°

YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE



PICTURE TIME: 7:02 AM, WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 26, 2020

Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Satellite and radar show quiet conditions over the Marianas with only a few showers and partly cloudy skies. Deep convection is otherwise spread around the Marianas to the east, south and west. A poorly-organized and elongated circulation is found in the Philippine Sea, well west of the area near 15N135E with a surface trough extending eastward between 10N and 12N toward the Marshall Islands.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

MICRONESIA		▲ ▼ °F
Guam and Rota	Thunderstorms	86° / 78°
Palau	Thunderstorms	83° / 77°
Yap	Thunderstorms	85° / 78°
Chuuk	Thunderstorms	88° / 79°
Pohnpei	Thunderstorms	87° / 76°
Kosrae	Thunderstorms	87° / 76°
Majuro	Thunderstorms	86° / 80°

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	6:03 AM	6:33 PM
Friday	6:04 AM	6:32 PM
Saturday	6:04 AM	6:31 PM
Sunday	6:04 AM	6:30 PM
Monday	6:04 AM	6:29 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	-	12:24 AM	1:46 PM
Friday	-	1:18 AM	2:45 PM
Saturday	-	2:13 AM	3:40 PM
Sunday	-	3:10 AM	4:32 PM
Monday	-	4:05 AM	5:19 PM

AROUND THE GLOBE		▲ ▼ °F
Auckland	Showers	61° / 52°
Beijing	Partly Cloudy	84° / 66°
Hong Kong	Thunderstorms	88° / 82°
Honolulu	Partly Cloudy	87° / 75°
London	Partly Cloudy	75° / 57°
Los Angeles	Sunny	83° / 68°
Manila	Thunderstorms	86° / 79°
Melbourne	Partly Cloudy	61° / 45°
Miami	Thunderstorms	86° / 79°
New York	Partly Cloudy	79° / 61°
Osaka	Partly Cloudy	91° / 81°
Paris	Showers	82° / 64°
Busan	Thunderstorms	84° / 72°
Rome	Sunny	91° / 68°
Salem	Partly Cloudy	90° / 71°
San Francisco	Partly Cloudy	66° / 56°
Seoul	Mostly Sunny	82° / 63°
Tokyo	Thunderstorms	88° / 73°
Washington, DC	Partly Cloudy	79° / 62°

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY		FEET
1:17 AM	HIGH TIDE	1.91
8:58 AM	LOW TIDE	0.11
4:25 PM	HIGH TIDE	1.75
9:23 PM	LOW TIDE	1.34

FLIGHT SCHEDULE

DEPARTURES				ARRIVALS			
SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)				**GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN**			
UA117	7:30am	8:10am	1, 4, 6	UA174	5:50am	6:31am	1, 4, 6

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); UA United Airlines • ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. *(The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)*

STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.

SAIPAN TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
1301.2	8:30AM	9:00AM	Tues/Fri
1303	3:30PM	4:00PM	Tues/Fri

ROTA TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
3101.2	9:30AM	10:00AM	Tues/Fri
3103	4:30PM	5:00PM	Tues/Fri

ROTA TO GUAM

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
3401	12:15	12:45	Temporarily Unavailable

GUAM TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
4301	13:00	13:30	Temporarily Unavailable

SAIPAN TO TINIAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
1201	7:00	7:15	Temporarily Unavailable
1202	8:00	8:15	Daily
1203	9:00	9:15	Daily
1204	10:00	10:15	Temporarily Unavailable
1205	11:00	11:15	Temporarily Unavailable
1206	12:00	12:15	Temporarily Unavailable
1207	13:00	13:15	Temporarily Unavailable
1208	14:00	14:15	Temporarily Unavailable
1209	15:00	15:15	Daily
1210	16:00	16:15	Daily
1211	17:00	17:15	Temporarily Unavailable
1212	18:00	18:15	Temporarily Unavailable

TINIAN TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
2101	7:30	7:45	Temporarily Unavailable
2102	8:30	8:45	Daily
2103	9:30	9:45	Daily
2104	10:30	10:45	Temporarily Unavailable
2105	11:30	11:45	Temporarily Unavailable
2106	12:30	12:45	Temporarily Unavailable
2107	13:30	13:45	Temporarily Unavailable
2108	14:30	14:45	Temporarily Unavailable
2109	15:30	15:45	Daily
2110	16:30	16:45	Daily
2111	17:30	17:45	Temporarily Unavailable
2112	18:30	18:45	Temporarily Unavailable

STOP THE SPREAD

The Governor's COVID-19 Task Force and Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. continue to encourage residents within the Marianas to practice social distancing, which means avoiding close contact with people in order to avoid catching the virus yourself and to avoid passing it on to others.

- Stay home as much as possible. Avoid unnecessary travel or public places.
- Avoid social gatherings in groups of more than 10.
- Choose drive-thru, take-out, or delivery options, or outdoor seating, if available, when dining in.
- Send only one healthy adult from the household run necessary errands, such as getting groceries or picking up medications. Leave children, elderly, and other vulnerable people at home as much as possible. When returning home from an errand, wash your hands before doing anything else.
- Older adults and people with chronic medical conditions are at higher risk of getting very sick from this illness. People at high risk should stay at home as much as possible.
- Create a household plan of action, https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prepare/checklist-household-ready.html
- Ensure a 30-day supply of all medicines.

Continue good hand hygiene

- Wash your hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and water, avoid touching your face, cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue or your sleeve.
- Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not readily available.

Know the signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and what to do if you become symptomatic

- Stay home when you are sick and if you recently traveled to a place with COVID-19. Self-quarantine means:
- ❏ Choosing a room in your house that can be used to separate sick household members from others.
- ❏ Washing your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- ❏ Avoiding touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- ❏ Limiting visitors

CHCC appreciates the patience and understanding of the community at this time. To obtain general information about the CNMI COVID-19 response, contact the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force Hotline at 287-0046, 287-0489, 287-1089. These numbers are available Monday to Sunday, 7:30am - 4:30pm.

For medical information about COVID-19, reach out to the COVID-19 Infoline at the following numbers: 285-1672/1352. These numbers are available Monday to Friday, 7:30am - 4:30pm.

For mental health support and helpful tips during a crisis, call the Mental Health Support Line at 285-1856, 323-6560, 323-6561 These numbers are available Monday to Friday, 7:30am - 4:30 pm. For the 24/7 Disaster Distress Helpline, call SAMSHA at 1-800-985-5990.

For more information about DIY face coverings, visit https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cloth-face-cover.html

For more information about CHCC programs, follow CHCC on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter at @cnmichcc, check out our website at www.chcc.gov.mp or call us at (670) 234-8950.

For more information on the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force, visit www.governor.gov.mpand, follow @GovernorCNMI on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.

This health advisory may be found online at http://www.chcc.gov.mp/pressrelease.html and at www.governor.gov.mp/covid-19.

Rumor control

During crises like this, oftentimes the spread of misinformation is just as dangerous as the virus itself. The CNMI is reminded to only share official and verified notices, press releases, and advisories from the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force and CHCC.

Source: Office of the Governor

NMI CRIME STOPPERS

Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:

- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any IT&E cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.net

NEWS DESK For news tips, corrections and requests for news coverage, call (670) 235-NEWS (6397), 235-2440, fax 235,3740. E-mail: editor@saipantribune.com. Website:www.saipantribune.com.

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China hands over Kahmar Bridge project to FSM

CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS

Kahmar Bridge serves as a crucial artery in Pohnpei State's Municipality of Nett.

Kahmar Bridge is 56 meters long (184 feet) and 10 meters wide (33 feet), and represents approximately $3.2 million of assistance.

PALIKIR, Pohnpei—Last Aug. 20 Federated States of Micronesia Vice President Yosiwo P. George spoke on the occasion of the formal handover ceremony on the comple-

» FSM in turn hands bridge to Pohnpei State

tion of the Kahmar Bridge Project. Kahmar Bridge, reconstructed by the People's Republic of China (through the FSM-China Great Friendship, serves as a crucial artery in Pohnpei State's Municipality of Nett.

"This bridge will become a symbol of our healthy great friendship between our two peoples," George said in his statement. "This bridge will not only connect our governments and improve access to the inlands of Nett, but will also contribute to the economic and social development of Nett, Pohnpei more broadly, and the Great Friendship between the FSM and China."

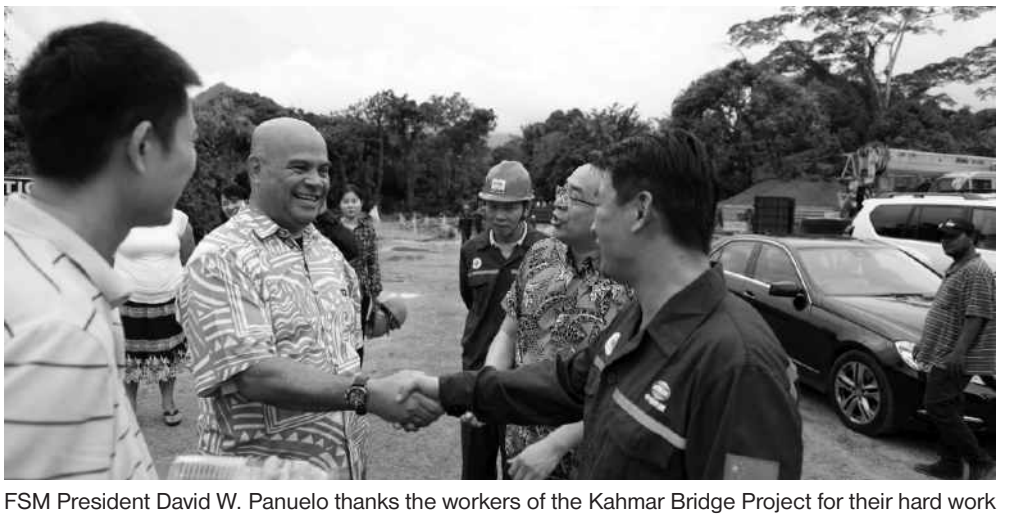
Federated States of Micronesia Vice President Yosiwo P. George, Pohnpei State Lt. Gov. Feliciano Perman, and Nett Mayor Nelsin Iriarte pose with a commemorative photo of the Kahmar Bridge.

"I would like to thank the China Railway 14th Bureau that implemented the project…. I also thank you, (Huang Zheng, ambassador of China to the FSM), and your government's continued monetary and medical supplies assistance toward our nation's COVID-19 relief efforts. They are contributing to the embodiment of our great friendship, built on the bedrock of mutual respect and the One-China Policy, which we have upheld and supported for nearly 31 years and will continue to do so in the decades and centuries to come."

Kahmar Bridge is 56 meters long (184 feet) and 10 meters wide (33 feet), and represents approximately $3.2 million of assistance. Originally signed in a Technical and Economic Cooperation Agreement in 2015, construction began on the bridge on June 26, 2019. While formal completion of the bridge had occurred some months ago, the official opening ceremony was delayed due to requirements for proper vetting and inspection, which occurred electronically due to the unique situation imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic. ***(PR)***

FSM second lady Antilise George joins Lihen Nett in cutting the ribbon symbolizing the opening of Kahmar Bridge

FSM President David W. Panuelo, first lady Patricia E. Edwin, Chinese Ambassador Huang Zheng, and Mrs. Huang pose with the Kahmar Bridge Project team (Photo from Nov. 6, 2019).



FSM President David W. Panuelo thanks the workers of the Kahmar Bridge Project for their hard work (Photo from Nov. 6, 2019).

Applications for Project Haligi temporarily halted

Due to high volume of applicants, the Lady Diann Torres Foundation has temporarily stopped receiving proposals for its 2020 Project Haligi-Canvas of Hope project.

The LDTF said they have temporarily stopped accepting proposals until such time they would be able to accommodate future artists. For the meantime, "Stay safe, wash your hands frequently, keep your distance, wear your mask, and avoid large crowds," it said in a statement.

LDTF also extends its gratitude to all participating artists and program partners: Marianas Visitors Authority, Commonwealth Utilities Corp., Northern Marianas Housing Corp., Office of the Governor, Department of Community and Cultural Affairs, Department of Corrections, Meena Benavente, and more for making this project a possibility. ***(PR)***

Annabelle Soledad Tudela Sablan paints a piece of art inspired by banana leaves or in Chamorro hagun chotda on an assigned pole under the Lady Diann Torres Foundation's 2020 Project Haligi-Canvas of Hope located at the Tun Herman Pan Road.

Business

Imported orchids and more at Kiara's Garden

By BEA CABRERA
beacabrerasaipan@gmail.com
CORRESPONDENT

With the COVID-19 pandemic, most people would rather stay home and keep safe and because of this, many have picked up gardening. According to Kiara's Garden owner and gardener Dhez Javier, one does not need a big lot or any lot at all to start this hobby.

"Orchids are the best plants to have whether you have a garden or not because some of them can be planted outside while some can be in a pot inside the house. Orchids have been the bestsellers at the shop that is why I have been replenishing our supply… The flowers will last for at least two months and then they keep on blooming all year round," she said.

"We have just received our orchids that came from Hawaii and there is a good variety of them— *rama*, *dendrodium*, *miltonia*, *cymbidium*, and *oncidium*. The demand for orchids on island is high and we have to import because it's not available here… our prices start at $18 and up," she added.

For more information, call 989-1062

BEA CABRERA

Orchids from Hawaii are now available at Kiara's Garden.

Now at their new location beside Tenda Market in Koblerville, Kiara's Garden has more space for her growing plant inventory. "We moved here in July from San Antonio and we have a better and bigger space. I love it because we have many butterflies that come and enjoy the flowers," Javier said.

"Our former location is used for propagating and when all the plants are healthy and ready, we transfer it here… Aside from orchids, we ship unique succulents from California and we have a lot of variety of plants that can be placed indoors and outdoors," Javier added.

According to Javier gardening can be more than an interest as it can be a way of life. "Once you are in too deep caring for your plants—extracting, repotting, or trimming—sometimes you will lose track of time because it is very relaxing and you don't need many or sophisticated tools. I am glad that people are continuing or picking up this hobby especially during this pandemic," she said.

"It makes me happy when people send me messages describing how happy they are about this plant purchased from me. Gardening is good for our physical, emotional, and mental well-being as it builds self-esteem and since you feel less stressed tending to your plants, it boosts your immune system," she added.

Kiara's Garden in Koblerville is open from Monday to Sunday, 9am-6pm. For more information, call 989-1062 or look them up on Facebook: Kiara's Garden

BEA CABRERA

A wide array of unique succulents from California in colorful pots.

BEA CABRERA

Kiara's Garden moved from San Antonio to a bigger area beside Tenda Market in Koblerville.

Nation

Prosecutors depict ex-officer as complicit in Floyd's death

MINNEAPOLIS (AP)—Prosecutors have urged a Minnesota judge not to dismiss the charges against one of four former Minneapolis police officers charged in the death of George Floyd, saying Tou Thao pushed back a crowd of concerned bystanders and prevented them from intervening as the other officers pinned Floyd to the ground.

In a filing late Monday, the attorney general's office said there is "more than sufficient" evidence to support charges of aiding and abetting second-degree murder and second-degree manslaughter against Thao. His attorney had filed a motion to dismiss.

Hennepin County District Judge Peter Cahill has scheduled a hearing for Sept. 11 to hear motions. The four were fired after the May 25 death of Floyd, a Black man, which sparked protests against racial injustice and police brutality worldwide.

Derek Chauvin, who kept his knee pressed to Floyd's neck for nearly eight minutes, is charged with second-degree murder, third-degree murder and second-degree manslaughter. J. Kueng and Thomas Lane face the same charges as Thao. Prosecutors want to try the four together. Trial is scheduled to begin March 8.

"In the first five minutes Floyd was on the ground, he told the officers at least 20 times that he could not breathe. He told them nearly 10 times that he was dying. And then he fell silent," prosecutors wrote.

"As Floyd lost consciousness, a crowd of bystanders pleaded with Thao. They told him that the officers were killing Floyd. They screamed that Floyd had stopped moving. They alerted Thao that Floyd had stopped breathing. And they begged Thao almost 30 times to take Floyd's pulse," the filing continued. "But instead of intervening on Floyd's behalf, Thao continued to push the crowd of bystanders back to the sidewalk, allowing the other officers to continue to pin Floyd to the ground—with Chauvin on Floyd's neck, Kueng on Floyd's back, and Lane on Floyd's legs."

Thao has minimized his role in Floyd's death, describing himself in an interview with investigators as a "human traffic cone" as he held back the onlookers. His motion to dismiss cited a lack of probable cause to support the idea that Thao knew the other officers were going to commit a crime or that he intended to further the commission of a crime.

Thao's attorney, Bob Paule, did not immediately respond to messages seeking comment Tuesday.

Meanwhile, a federal review of the state's autopsy report filed into evidence Tuesday said it agrees with the state's findings that Floyd's heart stopped while he was being restrained.

The federal evaluation was conducted by the Office of the Armed Forces Medical Examiner and requested by the U.S. Department of Justice, which is investigating whether the officers violated Floyd's civil rights. The federal medical examiner found Floyd's death happened due to the police restraint "in the setting of" his serious heart disease, and methamphetamine and fentanyl use.

Hundreds of thousands flee US coast ahead of Hurricane Laura

GALVESTON, Texas (AP)—In the largest U.S. evacuation of the pandemic, more than half a million people were ordered to flee the Gulf Coast on Tuesday as Laura strengthened into a hurricane that forecasters said could slam Texas and Louisiana with ferocious winds, heavy flooding and the power to push seawater miles inland.

More than 385,000 residents were told to flee the Texas cities of Beaumont, Galveston and Port Arthur, and another 200,000 were ordered to leave low-lying Calcasieu Parish in southwestern Louisiana, where forecasters said as much as 13 feet (4 meters) of storm surge topped by waves could submerge whole communities.

Forecasters Tuesday night expected the storm to increase in strength by 33%, from 90 mph (144 kmh) to 120 mph (193 kmh) in just 24 hours. They project Laura to strike the coast as a major Category 3 hurricane. The strengthening may slow or stop just before landfall, forecasters said.

"The waters are warm enough everywhere there to support a major hurricane, Category 3 or even higher. The waters are very warm where the storm is now and will be for the entire path up until the Gulf Coast," National Hurricane Center Deputy Director Ed Rappaport said.

Louisiana Gov. John Bel Edwards said Laura is shaping up to look a lot like Hurricane Rita did 15 years ago when it ravaged southwest Louisiana.

"We're going to have significant flooding in places that don't normally see it," he said.

Ocean water was expected to push onto land along more than 450 miles (724 kilometers) of coast from Texas to Mississippi. Hurricane warnings were issued from San Luis Pass, Texas, to Intracoastal City, Louisiana, and storm surge warnings from the Port Arthur, Texas, flood protection system to the mouth of the Mississippi River.

The evacuations could get even bigger if the storm's track veers to the east or west, said Craig Fugate, the former head of the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

Fearing that people would not evacuate in time, Edwards said those in southwest Louisiana need to be where they intend to ride out Laura by noon Wednesday, when the state will start feeling the storm's effects.

Officials urged people to stay with relatives or in hotel rooms to avoid spreading the virus that causes COVID-19. Buses were stocked with protective equipment and disinfectant, and they would carry fewer passengers to keep people apart, Texas officials said.

Whitney Frazier, 29, of Beaumont spent Tuesday morning trying to get transportation to a high school where she could board a bus to leave the area.

"Especially with everything with COVID going on already on top of a mandatory evacuation, it's very stressful," Frazier said.

The storm also imperiled a center of the U.S. energy industry. The government said 84% of Gulf oil production and an estimated 61% of natural gas production were shut down. Nearly 300 platforms have been evacuated.

Asia

S. Korea closes many schools again

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)—South Korea is closing schools and returning to remote learning in the capital region as the country counted its 12th straight day of triple-digit daily increases in coronavirus cases.

Education Minister Yoo Eun-hae said Tuesday that at least 193 students and teachers were found infected over the past two weeks in the Seoul metropolitan region, where a viral surge has threatened to erase the country's hard-won epidemiological gains.

South Korea's Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reported 280 new cases of COVID-19, pushing the 12-day total to 3,175. The country's caseload is now at 17,945, including 310 deaths.

Yoo said most children at kindergartens, elementary, middle and high schools will receive online classes at least until Sept. 11. High-school seniors will continue to go to school so their studies are not disrupted ahead of the crucial national college exams.

The country delayed the start of the school year for weeks because of an outbreak in the southeast in spring before proceeding with phased reopenings beginning in May.

Keeping schools shut are a difficult political decision in a country where teenagers are thrown into hyper-competitive school environments because graduating from elite universities is seen as crucial to career prospects.

"The priority is to quickly stem the spread of transmissions and stabilize the situation, if only to hold the Dec. 3 national college entrance exam as planned without disruption," Yoo said in a news conference.

The KCDC said 221 of the new cases came from the greater Seoul area, home to half of the country's 51 million people, where churches emerged as major sources of infections before authorities shut them amid tightened social distancing restrictions. Infections have also been linked to schools, nurseries and other places.

The country since Sunday has banned larger gatherings, shut down nightspots and churches and removed fans from professional sports nationwide. Officials say the country could be forced to elevate social distancing restrictions if the virus doesn't slow after this week, measures that would batter an already weak economy.

Churches had been emerged as major sources of COVID-19 cases before authorities banned on-site worship services.

As of Tuesday afternoon, 915 infections were linked to a northern Seoul church whose pastor led a march of thousands of anti-government protesters earlier this month. The pastor is among those who developed COVID-19.

Nearly 200 infections have been linked to the Aug. 15 rallies as health authorities pleaded church members and protesters to come forward for testing. Many have remained out of contact or refused to get tested. Officials have expressed concern over conspiracy theories that the government was manipulating test results in a plot to shut down the church.

"I plead to you once once again: if we contact you and ask you to get tested, please get tested," said Kwon Jun-wook, director of South Korea's National Health Institute, during a virus briefing. "COVID-19 can't distinguish between political stances. It doesn't know the different kinds of religions that exist. It doesn't have a concept of ideology or beliefs. There's no way a virus has such things."

In other developments in the Asia-Pacific region:

■ ndia has reported more than 60,000 new infections, taking its total to 3.17 million. The Health Ministry also reported 848 deaths in the past 24 hours, taking total fatalities past 58,000. The recovery rate has reached nearly 76% as the Health Ministry added its highest number of recovered patients in a day, more than 66,500. Testing has also increased dramatically. Nearly a third of the tests being used are a fast, cheap test that screens for antigens, or viral proteins, rather than the molecular tests that detect the genetic code of the virus. The faster, cheaper ones are less accurate and require frequent retesting.

■ Hong Kong will ease some social distancing measures as coronavirus infections dwindle. A ban on dining inside restaurants during evening hours will be eased Friday. Businesses such as cinemas, beauty salons and some outdoor sports venues can reopen. And masks won't be required for exercising outdoors or while in country parks. Hong Kong's health minister said it is no longer possible to wait until there are no more local cases before relaxing social distancing. An infection surge in July had led to Hong Kong's toughest social-distancing measures yet. Since then infections have gradually dwindled. Monday was the first day in a month infections were in the single digits.

Hong Kong police arrest 2 opposition lawmakers over protests

HONG KONG (AP)—Hong Kong police arrested 16 people Wednesday on charges related to anti-government protests last year, including two opposition lawmakers.

Pro-democracy legislators Ted Hui and Lam Cheuk-ting were arrested early Wednesday, according to posts on their Facebook pages.

Posts on Lam's Twitter account said he had been arrested on charges of conspiring with others to damage property and obstructing the course of justice during a protest in July 2019. The tweets said he has also been accused of rioting on July 21, 2019.

That was the day a group of more than 100 men clad in white attacked protesters and passengers with steel rods and rattan canes in a subway station. Protesters and many from the opposition camp have accused the police of colluding with the attackers, as they arrived late to the scene and did not make arrests that night.

The post on Hui's Facebook page did not make clear the exact charges he was facing.

The Democratic Party in Hong Kong confirmed in a separate Facebook post that both members were arrested.

The two were arrested along with 14 others—aged between 26 and 48 years old—in relation to protests last year, according to a police official who spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to talk to the press before an official statement had been released.

The semi-autonomous Chinese city saw months of anti-government protests after the government announced its intent to pass a controversial extradition bill that would have allowed criminal suspects to be sent to the mainland to stand trial. Anger over the bill, seen as an infringement on the former British colony's freedoms, sparked protests that at times descended into violence between police and demonstrators, and protests continued even after the bill was later shelved.

Since the start of the protests in June 2019, Hong Kong police has made more than 9,000 arrests.

Prominent pro-democracy figures who have been arrested include activists Joshua Wong and Agnes Chow, as well as media tycoon Jimmy Lai, who is an outspoken advocate for democracy in Hong Kong.

World

FACING 2ND VIRUS WAVE

Spain tracks infections with soldiers

MADRID (AP)—Under strain from Europe's fastest-growing wave of coronavirus infections, the Spanish government cleared the way for more localized lockdowns Tuesday and deployed the military to bolster the country's faltering attempts to trace infections.

AP

Retired men wearing face masks against the spread of the new coronavirus, play cards in a park in Gran Canaria island, Spain, Thursday, Aug. 20, 2020.

With more than 400,000 confirmed cases since the onset of the epidemic and dozens of fresh daily clusters only days before the school year begins, Spain is grappling to slow the uncontrolled transmission of the virus. At least 28,872 people in the country have died with COVID-19 since February, although the figure doesn't include many who died without being tested for the virus.

Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez said Tuesday following the first Cabinet meeting after the summer recess that Spain's current infection rate is "preoccupying" but "far from the situation in mid-March," when his government imposed a state of emergency and a nationwide lockdown.

"There should be no fear that paralyzes us and prevents us from acting," the Socialist leader said in a televised statement. "What's needed is a stronger response to the threat."

Sánchez offered officials running the country's 17 regions 2,000 soldiers trained in contact tracing, which experts have identified as one of the country's weakest points in the aftermath of the pandemic's first wave.

He also pledged to declare regional emergency orders if virus continues spreading, something that should in theory help regional officials level issue new stay-at-home orders, restrict mobility or to curtail other activities.

In Spain's highly decentralized system, regions took over the pandemic management from the central government in mid-June, at the end of the 3-month lockdown. But some judges have ruled against regional moves to restrict nightlife entertainment, outdoor smoking or to impose localized confinement orders.

Regional officials, in turn, have complained that their hands are tied because only central authorities can legally declare a state of emergency.

The prime minister's offer to make such a declaration when regions request it was criticized by opposition parties, which accused Sánchez of deflecting responsibility.

Kremlin brushes off allegations over Navalny's poisoning

MOSCOW (AP)—The Kremlin brushed off allegations Tuesday that Russian opposition leader Alexei Navalny was the victim of an intentional poisoning orchestrated by authorities and said there were no grounds for a criminal investigation so far since it hasn't been fully established what caused the politician to fall into a coma.

The Russian government's insistence that Navalny wasn't necessarily the victim of a deliberate poisoning - comments amplified by Russian doctors and pro-Kremlin media—came a day after doctors at a German hospital where the 44-year-old is being treated said tests indicated he was poisoned.

Moscow's dismissals elicited outrage from Navalny's allies, who claim the Kremlin was behind the illness of its most prominent critic.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said the accusations against the government "absolutely cannot be true and are rather an empty noise."

"We do not intend to take it seriously," Peskov said.

Peskov said he saw no grounds for launching a criminal investigation at this stage, saying that Navalny's condition could have been triggered by a variety of causes and determining what it was should come first.

"If a substance (that caused the condition) is found, and if it is determined that it is poisoning, then there will be a reason for an investigation," Peskov said.

Navalny, a politician and corruption investigator who is one of Putin's fiercest critics, fell ill on a flight back to Moscow from Siberia on Thursday and was taken to a hospital in the Siberian city of Omsk after the plane made an emergency landing.

Over the weekend, he was transferred to the Charité hospital in Berlin, where doctors on Monday said they have found indications of "cholinesterase inhibitors" in his system.

These act by blocking the breakdown of a key chemical in the body, acetycholine, that transmits signals between nerve cells. Navalny is being treated with the antidote atropine.

Navalny's wife, Yulia Navalnaya, has been visiting her husband daily and made no comment to reporters as she arrived Tuesday.

Chancellor Angela Merkel personally offered Germany's help in treating Navalny and has called for a full Russian investigation—a sentiment echoed Tuesday by officials from the United States, France and Norway.

U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said that if reports about Navalny's poisoning "prove accurate, the United States supports the (European Union's) call for a comprehensive investigation and stands ready to assist in that effort."

On Tuesday, U.S. Deputy Secretary of State Stephen Biegun met with Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov and other diplomats. He expressed deep concern about Navalny's condition, "the impact on Russian civil society of reports of his poisoning, and the importance of transparency and freedom of speech in any democratic society," the U.S. Embassy spokesperson, Rebecca Ross, said on Twitter.

Environment

By ADRIANA BRASILEIRO AND ALEX HARRIS
MIAMI HERALD

TNS
A dead fish floats on the surface of the water in Downtown Miami, Florida on Biscayne Bay on Wednesday, August 12, 2020.

First, thousands of fish turned up dead in Biscayne Bay

MIAMI—Fish may not be the only victims of the pollution and hot temperatures that drove oxygen to insufficient levels in Biscayne Bay and led to a mortality event that shocked Miami residents last week.

Coral reefs in the bay risk bleaching if water conditions don't improve soon, scientists said. Prolonged periods of high ocean temperatures cause coral to expel the algae that live inside them, leaving them more vulnerable to stressors like pollution and a deadly disease that's ravaging reefs in Florida.

"It's a one-two punch for corals," said Chris Langdon, director of the Coral Reefs and Climate Change Laboratory at the University of Miami's Rosenstiel School of Marine and Atmospheric Science. "Heat is breaking records and there's more nutrients flowing into the bay, so we are watching closely for signs of stress on the corals."

Even if the reefs are offshore and not near coastal areas where the recent fish kill happened, worsening conditions in Biscayne Bay could affect the patches of the Florida reef tract that are already under pressure from ocean acidification, dredging and heavy boat traffic, he said.

Early last week, thousands of dead fish were spotted floating in different locations in the northern part of Biscayne Bay as water temperatures reached about 90 degrees and dissolved oxygen dropped to levels that made it impossible for fish to survive. The fish kill was first observed by residents swimming near Morningside Park, and later spread to other parts of the bay.

While environmental authorities tested the water and didn't find evidence of toxic algal blooms, scientists think that chronic pollution and a seagrass die-off a few years ago created the backdrop for a "perfect storm" when temperatures rose very fast. Low wind, which reduced water circulation, and above-average rainfall in the Miami area also increased nutrient discharges from the Little River and other canals that feed into the bay.

Fish kills happen when warmer water and higher salinity levels lead to a drop in dissolved oxygen, especially in shallow areas. If algae blooms occur as a result of increased nutrients in the water, there's more life using the oxygen in addition to fish. At night, when the algae aren't producing oxygen through photosynthesis, the situation can reach critical levels, with fish, algae and all other microorganisms breathing but no oxygen being produced.

TNS
A pump oxygenates water back into Biscayne Bay in Morningside Park in Miami, Florida on Monday, August 17, 2020. City officials ordered the use of these pumps in response to a recent fish kill that left thousands of dead fish scattered across Biscayne Bay due to low oxygen levels in the water.

For corals, high water temperatures and pollution cause them to expel the algae that live inside them, providing food and giving them their bright colors. In hot temperatures, the algae become toxic and the corals basically spit them out. Without the algae, the corals weaken, turn bone white and become more susceptible to disease and death.

Water temperatures at Virginia Key reached 92.5 degrees Fahrenheit on July 2, the highest temperature since the station was installed in 1994, tweeted Brian McNoldy, a senior research associate at Rosenstiel.

That record was unusual, because peak temperatures are usually seen in August, said Mark Eakin, a coordinator for NOAA's Coral Reef Watch. This month, NOAA satellites have already recorded temperatures as high as 88 degrees Fahrenheit in Biscayne Bay, a mere 2 degrees from the record set on Aug 17, 2017.

» Coral bleaching might be next

Eakin noted the satellites aren't specific enough to detect temperature changes within north Biscayne Bay, where the bulk of the fish kill occurred. But the satellites do help scientists make predictions, and right now Biscayne Bay is expected to get even hotter.

In a few weeks, NOAA predicts the Bay could be warm enough for serious coral bleaching. This week, Biscayne Bay is under a coral bleaching warning, but Eakin said it could escalate to alert level 1 as soon as next week. At that point, 10% of the coral or more could begin to bleach.

"If the temperatures continue to rise as they're forecast to, we're likely to see coral bleaching increase across South Florida," he said.

The Keys has been under a level 1 alert for weeks and could jump to a level 2 soon, where "you also start to see significant coral mortality," Eakin said.

However, he said, after years of decimation from heat, pollution and other human-caused factors, the most sensitive corals have all but died off, leaving only the hardiest and most heat-resistant corals behind.

"They're capable of surviving all kinds of punishment," he said. "That's why you don't see a lot of corals in Biscayne Bay, they're the ones that can take a lot of abuse."

Last week, coral reefs in the Keys shifted from a bleach warning to a level 1 alert, which means some corals are starting to bleach, according to NOAA's Coral Reef Watch predictions.

A Mote Marine Lab report issued Friday found there were 15 confirmed reports of partial bleaching in the first two weeks of August. At most sites, fewer than 10% of the reef was affected, although several inshore reefs saw more than 75% affected.

Cory Walter, a staff biologist at Mote, said she's seen some minor bleaching across the marine sanctuary she patrols. In most places, less than 10% of the reef is affected. But in some inshore reefs, like Newfound Harbour Key, the damage currently covers around 75% of the reefs.

NOAA predictions show a brief reprieve in the coming weeks, then seven weeks straight at alert level 1 conditions. Hot water for that long is bad news for corals, Walter said. In 2014, during a warm summer in South Florida, a bleaching event claimed patches of the 220-mile Florida reef tract that stretches between the Dry Tortugas and Fort Pierce.

"It's possible we could see a mass bleaching event if these temperatures don't drop," she said. "If it's really bad, it almost looks like it snows on the reef because everything turns white."

But a strong wind _ or a tropical storm brushing by _ could be enough to churn the water and cool it down to more coral-friendly temperatures. And with 2020 predicted to be the most active hurricane season on record, that could happen as soon as the end of the week.

Another spot of good news for Florida's heat-stressed corals: giant corals restored by Mote spawned for the first time last week.

Corals only attain sexual maturity at a certain size, which can take decades to reach. Mote grew more corals in a lab and fused them onto the naturally occurring coral, speeding up the process to just five years.

Also, the corals Mote grew were specially selected to be resistant to high temperatures and disease. Now, they're ready to reproduce.

Climate change is the biggest threat to corals, as rising temperatures, increased levels of carbon dioxide in the water and more devastating hurricanes combine to create an inhospitable environment for corals.

Curbing emissions and slowing down the impact of global warming would be the most effective way to save coral reefs, said Stephannie Kettle, Mote's public relations manager. In the meantime, Mote is doing its best to restore the corals that remain.

"Coral restoration isn't the answer. It doesn't make it OK for these changes to not be implemented," she said. "If we wait for those changes, our reef may be gone."

Life & Style

20 years later, 'Bring It On' still gets the cheers

By LINDSEY BAHR
ASSOCIATED PRESS

No one expected "Bring It On" to win its opening weekend. The Kirsten Dunst and Gabrielle Union teen cheerleading comedy was facing off against a $60 million Wesley Snipes action film. But on the weekend of August 25, 2000 the $10 million pic about the Rancho Carne Toros and the East Compton Clovers skyrocketed to No. 1 and stayed there for two weeks.

"Bring It On" has been defying expectations since the beginning, when it was still called "Cheer Fever" and getting first-time screenwriter Jessica Bendinger nothing but "no's" from the studios (27 in total).

Not only was it a hit of its time (that spawned five direct-to-video sequels) but 20 years later is just as relevant as ever for its prescient themes and young fans from Ariana Grande to Jerry Harris of the Netflix phenomenon "Cheer."

The Associated Press spoke to Bendinger and director Peyton Reed about making "Bring It On." Remarks have been edited for clarity and brevity.

AP
In this combination photo, Kirsten Dunst appears at the screening of her film "The Cat's Meow" in Los Angeles, on April 10, 2002, left, and Gabrielle Union arrives at a screening for her film "Bad Boys II," in Los Angeles on July 9, 2003.

AP: What was the story behind changing the title from "Cheer Fever" to "Bring It On"?

REED: There was a studio attitude that the word "cheer" was going to narrow the audience too much and that people might just think it's a cheerleading movie. And I'm thinking, "Well it IS a cheerleading movie." But they came up with lists to encapsulate the attitude of the movie.

BENDINGER: I think it was a big wrestling call out back in the day, like "bring it on." I thought it was kind of funny.

REED: I liked the confrontational aspect of it. But there is that scene with Gabrielle when she says to "bring it" in the final. I remember having to wrap my overly logical head around "Wait, she says 'bring it' she doesn't say 'bring it on.'"

AP: Did the $10 million budget feel like a lot, or enough?

REED: It never seems like a lot but it also felt like, that's cool, this is going to be a scrappy movie. We were all so enthusiastic about making it. We knew in relation to other movies at Universal that we were small potatoes but that gave us a certain amount of freedom. We were off their radar a little bit.

BENDINGER: I remember going down to Oceanside, California, to film the nationals and thinking wow, this is actually pretty impressive.

REED: We made Oceanside look like Florida except the ocean was on the wrong side.

AP: Did the script change much from when you started pitching in 1996?

BENDINGER: I've been revisiting my youthful indiscretions in writing form because I'm publishing the screenplay for the first time with some never-before-seen scenes. I had like six endings. But Peyton saw the David in the marble.

REED: That first draft would have been a sprawling, three-hour cheerleading epic.

AP: Is anything you wish you could change?

BENDINGER: We did try to put nuance in it that whole thing with Jan and Courtney and the "digits that slip" occasionally. It was a very ambitious way to talk about slut-shaming, in my mind. When I see that now, it's awkward for me and uncomfortable. In a teen comedy, it's just not reading that way even if it was our intention.

REED: I think any time you try to push boundaries, there are things that age well and things that don't.

AP: Why do you think "Bring It On" gets referred to as a cult classic when it made so much money ($90.5 million) at the time?

REED: Jessica has theory that made sense to me. And it was basically like a high percentage of guys who talk to us about the movie come up and say, "Listen, I know it wasn't targeted at me but...". They qualify their positive feelings. Maybe it's a cult movie because guys are embarrassed to admit they like it.

Polanski's request to restore film academy membership denied

Polanski

LOS ANGELES (AP)—A judge on Tuesday denied Roman Polanski's request to restore his membership in the organization that bestows the Academy Awards two years after he was expelled from it for raping a minor.

The fugitive film director sued in April 2019, asking the court to compel the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences to make him a member in good standing again.

A year earlier, the academy made the rare move of expelling Polanski and Bill Cosby, months after ending the membership of disgraced movie mogul Harvey Weinstein.

Polanski appealed the decision, and in January 2019 the academy rejected his appeal.

Los Angeles Superior Court Judge Mary Strobel on Tuesday ruled that the academy had a right to expel Polanski, afforded him a fair hearing and gave him sufficient notice of his expulsion. She adopted a tentative ruling that she had issued earlier on Tuesday as her final order.

Harland Braun, Polanski's lawyer said the 87-year-old director has no plans to appeal Strobel's decision.

"Roman's membership in the academy is pretty worthless and we would not waste legal fees for an appeal for no real purpose," Braun said in an email Tuesday to The Associated Press. "Roman is one of the greatest directors in movie history. His art will survive long after the academy is a forgotten relic."

Radio station fires worker over role in Yusuf Hawkins death

NEW YORK (AP)—A man who was among those charged in the notorious 1989 killing of Yusuf Hawkins, a Black teen set upon by a white mob and shot, was fired from a New York hip-hop radio station after a new documentary brought the murder case renewed attention.

WQHT-FM, known as Hot 97, announced over the weekend that Pasquale Rauc-ci—who had worked at the station since 1994 in mostly behind-the-scenes roles and was known under the name Paddy Duke—was fired following an uproar from viewers of the documentary "Yusuf Hawkins: Storm Over Brooklyn." The film was directed by Muta'Ali and premiered on HBO earlier this month.

"HOT97 was shocked and took swift action. Paddy Duke is no longer employed by HOT97. The march for social justice continues," the station said on Twitter.

Hawkins, 16, had gone to the Bensonhurst neighborhood of Brooklyn with some friends to look at a car when he was attacked by a group of white youths, one of whom shot him.

Several young men were charged, including Joseph Fama, who was accused of being the gunman and was convicted of murder. Raucci was the last to go through trial, and was acquitted in 1991 of the most serious charges against him. The New York Times reported he was ultimately sentenced to probation and community service for having a bat as a weapon.

Couple planning wedding want to keep haters away

DEAR ABBY: My fiance and I have begun planning our wedding for next year. We have both been married before, so family doesn't think we should have a "big" celebration. Mom actually told me that it can't be as special as my first one.

While lying in bed the other night, we were discussing how to address people's opinions because we don't want our wedding day to be full of people complaining about being there, choices we made regarding our celebration and thinking they need to give us a gift. We would like to include a "disclaimer" saying something like, "If you're not truly happy for us, stay home!" I realize that etiquette would not allow us to do it. Do you have any suggestions for our situation?

OUR "BIG DAY"

DEAR "BIG DAY": Many couples today have been married more than once. Your mother was correct when she told you this second wedding should be more low-key than the first. Rest assured that no one will attend your wedding who doesn't want to be there because attendance is not compulsory.

I'm glad you recognize that the "disclaimer" would be inappropriate. If you prefer your guests forgo giving you a gift, convey that by having someone else deliver it VERBALLY—such as your mother or members of your wedding party—when guests call to ask where you are registered. The wording should be: "They only want you to share in their happiness on this special day. No gift is expected or required."

DEAR ABBY: I have been married more than 40 years. We are now retired and moved to a small town a few years ago. My problem is my husband does almost nothing to help out around the house. I do the housekeeping, shopping, cooking, bill paying and most of the extensive outdoor upkeep. Although I was the primary breadwinner during our marriage, my husband thinks his "work" is now over.

He watches TV all day long, but when he does want to get out and do something, it must always include me. I'm sick of his face at this point. I'm sure I'm short-tempered at times because everything falls on my shoulders. When I ask him to do something or offer my "two cents," he accuses me of nagging and won't talk to me for days.

I hate this life! I don't think he would go to a marriage counselor because he feels I'm the problem. I think I want a divorce, but I don't want this lazy bum to get half of everything I've earned and saved. Help!

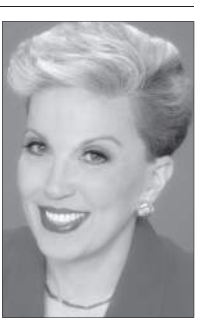
IRKED IN IDAHO

DEAR IRKED: You have my sympathy, but you created this "monster" by tolerating your husband's laziness and controlling nature all these years. Because he won't talk to a marriage counselor doesn't mean that you shouldn't. It's important you learn coping skills to deal with his passive aggression, which is what the silent treatment is. If a licensed therapist can't help to relieve the pressure on you, then make an appointment with a lawyer to discuss what options you may have short of divorce. I'm crossing my fingers that you have some.

What teens need to know about sex, drugs, AIDS and getting along with peers and parents is in "What Every Teen Should Know." Send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for $8 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Teen Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

DEAR ABBY

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE



Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson

IT'S A RANSOM NOTE! THAT DIRTY CALVIN STOLE MY DOLL AND HE WANTS ME TO PAY $100 TO GET HER BACK!
OF ALL THE NERVE! HE CAN'T GET AWAY WITH THIS! WHY, THAT STINKY LITTLE...
WAIT! THERE'S SOMETHING ELSE IN THIS ENVELOPE.
A PHOTO OF BINKY BETSY TIED TO A CHAIR!!
WHAT A GREAT CLUB!
HOW ARE YOU GOING TO SPEND YOUR $50?

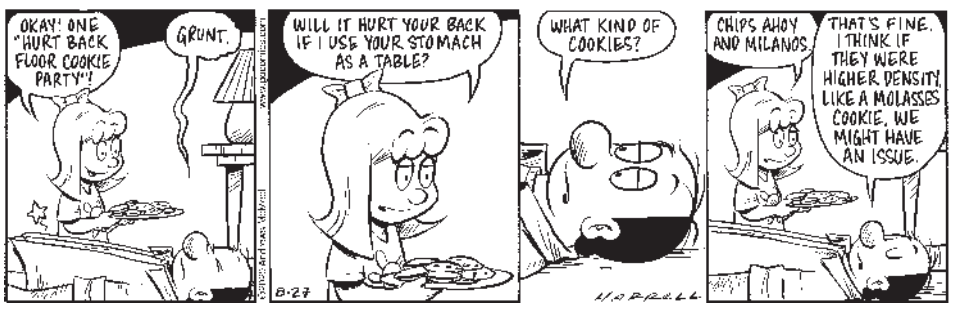
Garfield®

By Jim Davis

TODAY IS JUST LIKE YESTERDAY
GRASSHOPPERS HAVE TAKEN OVER MY UNDERWEAR DRAWER!
JUST EXACTLY LIKE YESTERDAY...
JIM DAVIS 8-27

Adam@home

By Bryan Basset


OKAY! ONE "HURT BACK FLOOR COOKIE PARTY"!
GRUNT.
WILL IT HURT YOUR BACK IF I USE YOUR STOMACH AS A TABLE?
WHAT KIND OF COOKIES?
CHIPS AHOY AND MILANOS.
THAT'S FINE. I THINK IF THEY WERE HIGHER DENSITY, LIKE A MOLASSES COOKIE, WE MIGHT HAVE AN ISSUE.
B-27

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy

CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

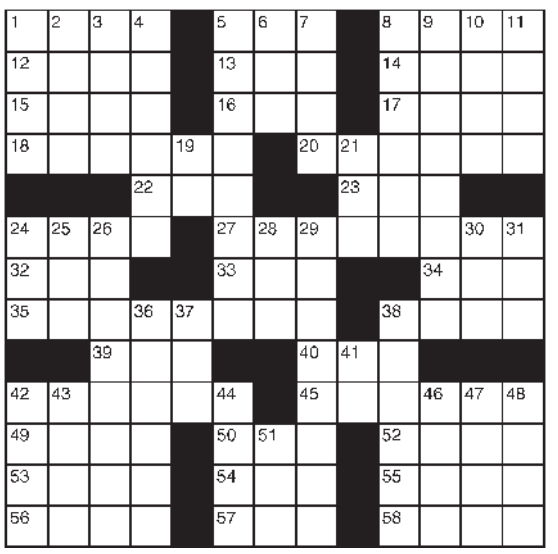
ACROSS
1 School session
5 Little lie
8 Transcript stats
12 "Night" author Wiesel
13 Barn bird
14 Seized vehicle
15 Pond growth
16 Kanga's kid
17 Right on the map
18 Large champagne bottle
20 Wee amounts
22 Terre Haute sch.
23 Compass pt.
24 Ten-cent piece
27 Head out to
32 Tours season
33 Mandela's org.
34 Mentalist Geller
35 Ruby anniversary
38 Sty chow
39 Silent
40 "A mouse!"
42 Baby grands, e.g.
45 Like a melting ice cream cone
49 Singer India.—
50 Santa's helper
52 "Encore!"
53 Mani counterpart
54 Dove's call
55 Entreaty
56 Org.
57 Roofing goo
58 Former frosh

DOWN
1 Squad
2 Jazzy Fitzgerald
3 Diana of "The Avengers"
4 Ogre
5 Chemical "recipes"
6 — Jima
7 Inky stain
8 "Summer Nights" musical
9 Placid
10 Church area
11 Lushes
19 "People" rival
21 Gun the engine
24 Dict. info
25 Olympic skater Midori
26 Mythic sea dwellers
28 Tolkien creature
29 Deeply desired
30 Acapulco gold
31 Shred
36 Radio host's invitation
37 "As I see it," to a texter
38 Cuts corners
41 Hosp. triage area
42 Dad
43 Enrages
44 Faction
46 Casual shirt
47 Get ready, briefly
48 "Amen!"
51 Mauna —

Solution time: 24 mins.

S	O	W	S	■	T	A	J	■	I	B	E	R
E	H	A	I	■	H	I	C	■	C	L	I	O
E	S	C	A	L	A	D	E	■	N	O	R	A
M	O	O	R	E	■	■	S	P	I	C	E	D
■	■	■	I	O	U	I	■	I	C	K	■	■
M	O	H	S	■	B	E	E	I	■	A	P	E
P	H	O	■	Z	E	S	I	Y	■	D	E	L
G	E	M	■	U	H	S	A	■	I	R	■	■
■	■	E	R	L	■	A	L	A	R	■	■	■
F	A	M	O	U	S	■	■	L	A	T	I	N
E	B	A	Y	■	R	E	N	E	G	A	D	E
A	L	D	A	■	T	V	A	■	I	R	E	S
R	E	E	R	■	A	A	H	■	C	P	A	S

Yesterday's answer 8-27



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Kayla Ewell, 35; Aaron Paul, 41; Sarah Chalke, 44; Chandra Wilson, 51.

Happy Birthday: Slow down. Keep your plans moving at a steady and doable pace. Your reliability will make a difference this year when it comes to progress and advancement. Stretch your mind, learn new skills and be open to trying something different. Observing, listening and taking direction will help you win favors and discover how to get your way. Your numbers are 7, 13, 26, 29, 31, 38, 44.

ARIES *(March 21-April 19):* Complete what you start before you move on to something new. Don't let emotions interfere with your progress. It's up to you to avoid confrontations. If you refuse to argue, you will spare yourself grief. Stick to your plan. ✪✪

TAURUS *(April 20-May 20):* Time is on your side. Don't feel the need to accommodate someone pressuring you to make a snap decision. The uncertainty you offer will buy you time to gather pertinent information to ensure you make the right decision. Romance is featured. ✪✪✪✪

GEMINI *(May 21-June 20):* Keep your opinions to yourself. The less you let others know about you or your beliefs, the better. Gather information that will help you assess the relationships you have with your colleagues, friends and neighbors. Leave nothing to chance. ✪✪

CANCER *(June 21-July 22):* Look for financial opportunities, and don't be afraid to do things differently. What you learn from people who are different from you will be helpful. Focus on the positive and be willing to compromise, and help will be offered. Romance is encouraged. ✪✪✪

LEO *(July 23-Aug. 22):* Look for the good in every situation, and you will be an inspiration to others. Base a partnership you are considering on honesty, integrity and equality. Joint ventures will work only if fair play is involved. Don't get caught in someone else's fight. ✪✪✪✪✪

VIRGO *(Aug. 23-Sept. 22):* Be rational. If you let your emotions take over, you will make poor decisions. Put more emphasis on the pastimes and people who make you happy. Aim to lower stress by dismissing no-win situations. Distance yourself from manipulative people. ✪✪

LIBRA *(Sept. 23-Oct. 22):* Take care of matters that others have ignored. Make what you do a priority, and focus on what will help you excel. Refuse to let others put demands on you without offering something substantial in return. Pick up the pace. ✪✪✪✪

SCORPIO *(Oct. 23-Nov. 21):* Ask for help, and you will get what you want. Don't sit back when progress depends on what you do. Schedule something special for you and someone you love, and it will encourage a closer bond. Personal growth and enlightenment are featured. ✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS *(Nov. 22-Dec. 21):* Prepare for the unexpected. You'll have to be quick on your feet if you want to avoid a situation riddled with uncertainty. You are ready to do your own thing, so don't saddle yourself with someone's responsibilities. ✪✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN *(Dec. 22-Jan. 19):* Go after your dreams. Take advantage of an offer that can help you get ahead. Refuse to get involved in a no-win situation. Arguing is a waste of time. Wheel and deal to come out on top. ✪✪✪

AQUARIUS *(Jan. 20-Feb. 18):* Don't get caught in a backlog of paperwork. Take care of responsibilities and red-tape issues. Find a way to give back to a cause or your community. What you offer will boost your reputation as well as your confidence. ✪✪✪

PISCES *(Feb. 19-March 20):* Take hold of whatever situation you find yourself in, and you will gain the respect of your peers. A personal change will turn out better than anticipated and help bring you closer to someone you love. Romance is on the rise. ✪✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are persuasive, smart and charming. You are intuitive and opportunistic.

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SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

3				9				4
	7		6		2		5	
				4	5			
	6	8					3	
2		5				7		6
	1					9	2	
			9	5				
	4		3		1		7	
5				8				1

Difficulty Level ★★★ 8/27

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's Answer

2	9	5	3	8	7	1	4	6
3	1	6	5	9	4	2	7	8
4	8	7	6	1	2	9	5	3
7	2	1	9	6	8	5	3	4
9	4	8	2	5	3	6	1	7
5	6	3	4	7	1	8	2	9
6	3	9	7	2	5	4	8	1
1	5	4	8	3	6	7	9	2
8	7	2	1	4	9	3	6	5

Difficulty Level ★★★

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the WONDERWORD.

TWO SCOOPS OF ... Solution: 7 letters

S	R	R	E	D	W	O	P	R	H	R	A	G	U	S
S	E	W	O	L	L	A	A	U	T	E	N	S	I	L
P	P	M	E	A	S	U	R	I	N	G	A	D	C	P
L	O	O	I	D	I	S	P	E	N	S	E	T	E	R
I	O	S	O	S	G	D	L	I	T	S	C	Ⓑ	C	O
T	C	P	S	N	O	E	S	N	D	O	S	Ⓞ	R	T
Q	S	A	I	U	S	F	E	E	N	E	N	Ⓦ	E	E
U	T	E	G	R	L	M	T	T	L	E	P	Ⓛ	A	I
A	N	H	O	O	T	A	A	B	R	D	L	B	M	N
N	E	M	U	O	L	I	A	E	N	I	A	U	D	I
T	M	R	L	U	N	T	T	S	F	S	T	L	O	A
I	G	L	N	E	E	T	A	K	E	O	E	K	O	T
T	A	A	R	G	A	T	H	E	R	U	F	R	F	B
Y	R	R	E	B	A	I	L	E	R	P	U	I	V	O
G	F	V	O	L	U	M	E	A	T	L	L	A	B	E

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Allotment, Allow, Bailer, Ball, Batter, Berry, Bowl, Bulk, Cone, Container, Dispense, Dough, Fill, Flour, Food, Fragment, Gather, Granulated, Heaps, Heat, Ice Cream, Ladles, Lift, Measuring, Meat, Morsel, Obtain, Plateful, Powder, Protein, Quantity, Scooper, Semisoft, Serve, Sides, Soup, Split, Spoons, Sugar, Take, Utensil, Vegetables, Volume, Wedge

Yesterday's Answer: Hydrogen

The NEW **Treasury 41** can be purchased online at www.WonderWordBooks.com, or call 1-800-642-6480.

Clippers roll past Mavs to retake series lead

FLORIDA (AP)—Paul George scored 35 points, Kawhi Leonard added 32 and the Los Angeles Clippers rolled past the Dallas Mavericks 154-111 on Tuesday night to take a 3-2 lead in their first-round Western Conference playoff series.

Montrezl Harrell added 19 points and 11 rebounds for the Clippers, who set a franchise record for points in a playoff game. Los Angeles can clinch the series on Thursday.

Dallas' Luka Doncic, who hit a game-winner at the buzzer in Game 4 to cap off a 43-point triple-double, was held to 22 points on 6-for-17 shooting.

Mavericks center Kristaps Porzingis sat out with right knee soreness. It was the second straight game the 7-foot-3 Latvian missed.

Dallas coach Rick Carlisle was ejected in the third quarter of the testy game, which included six techincals and a flagrant-1 foul.

Leonard scored 22 points and Paul George scored 18 to help Los Angeles take a 76-52 lead at halftime. The Clippers shot 61% in the first half and led by as many as 27 points.

The Clippers continued the onslaught in the second half, bumping the lead to as many as 45 points.

Doncic was issued a technical foul in the second quarter. Tim Hardaway Jr. was called for a flagrant-1 after winding up and hitting George in the face on a drive.Assistant Stephen Silas took over as coach after Carlisle was ejected.

The Clippers shot 67% from the field in the first quarter. Hardaway and Los Angeles' Marcus Morris were called for double technicals in the second quarter. Ivica Zubac was called for a technical in the third.

AP
Los Angeles Clippers' Paul George (13) drives to the basket against Dallas Mavericks' Justin Jackson (44) during the second half of an NBA first round playoff game Tuesday, Aug. 25, 2020, in Lake Buena Vista, Fla.

Nuggets 117, Jazz 107

Jamal Murray scored 33 of his 42 points in a second half where he played every minute and the Denver Nuggets avoided elimination by beating the Utah Jazz in Game 5.

The Nuggets trail the sixth-seeded Jazz 3-2 with Game 6 on Thursday.

Murray was unstoppable down the stretch in nearly matching his 50-point effort in Game 4. He hit 17 of 26 shots and had eight assists, including a pass to Nikola Jokic for a 3-pointer with 23.6 seconds remaining that sealed the win.

"Whenever he's like that we are winning the game or we are really close," said Jokic, who also didn't sub out in the second half. "That's what we need from him."

The dynamic tandem of Murray and Jokic clearly weren't ready to leave the NBA bubble just yet. Jokic had it going early as he scored 21 of his 31 points in the the first quarter.

Murray took over late after his team fell behind by as many as 15 points in the third quarter.

"We've all got a will to win. Simple as that," explained Murray, who played through a bruise on his knee. "That can carrying you. That can take you places."

With the game tied at 101, Murray scored nine straight for Denver to put the Nuggets up by nine with 1:20 to go.

Donovan Mitchell finished with 30 points while wearing a pair of bright, multicolored shoes. The sharpshooter is averaging 37.6 points over the five games.

Reserve Jordan Clarkson added 17 points and Joe Ingles found his rhythm with 13. Ingles had a combined two points in the previous two games.

"I thought at some level, we just lost our composure when we were ahead," Jazz coach Quin Snyder said. "Oftentimes, when a team's making a run you get a little distracted, and that's when we have to come together even more. Our guys know that, and we'll come out ready to play the next game."

Giannis named Defensive Player of the Year

Giannis Antetokounmpo figured somebody was in trouble.

Even though the Milwaukee Bucks had just defeated Orlando for a 3-1 lead in their playoff series, Mike Budenholzer wanted to talk to them in the locker room afterward.

Antetokounmpo looked around, wondering if a teammate was about to be scolded.

"Usually when coach wants to talk to us after a game, somebody messed up," Antetokounmpo said.

This time, it was because the Greek Freak did really well.

Antetokounmpo was voted NBA Defensive Player of the Year on Tuesday, becoming the fifth player to win that award and MVP in a career.

The All-Star, who was MVP last year and is the favorite to repeat this season, ended the two-year reign of Utah center Rudy Gobert as Defensive Player of the Year.

He got the news with the rest of his teammates on the league's best defensive team a day earlier.

Frustrated players wonder again whether they should play

FLORIDA (AP)—As the NBA sought to resume the season, players had to weigh whether playing basketball aided or distracted from their calls for social justice reform.

Those discussions are starting again.

With the second round of the postseason set to begin Thursday when Toronto plays Boston, players from both teams say there have been discussions about whether they should boycott games following the police shooting in Wisconsin of Jacob Blake, a Black man.

Players and coaches around the league say they have been frustrated and are upset after seeing cellphone video that showed Blake being shot multiple times after they have spent a month and a half in the bubble calling for reform.

"But it's not working, so obviously something has to be done and right now our focus really shouldn't be on basketball," Celtics guard Marcus Smart said. "I understand it's the playoffs and everything like that but we still have a bigger issue, an underlying issue that's going on and the things that we've tried haven't been working.

"So we definitely need to take a different approach and we need to try new things out to try to get this thing working the way that we know it should and get our voices heard even more."

They've certainly been trying. At Disney, players have walked onto a basketball court lined with the words Black Lives Matter, went to a knee for the playing of the national anthem, and afterward used interviews to call for justice for Breonna Taylor, a 26-year-old Black emergency medical technician who was shot eight times in Louisville, Kentucky, on March 13 by plainclothes officers serving a narcotics search warrant without knocking at her apartment. No drugs were found.

In the early weeks at Disney, players felt their message was getting out when anger over the death of George Floyd at the hands of Minneapolis police was still so fresh. But lately, having moved into the playoffs, the conversations had largely shifted toward basketball.

Now with Blake's shooting coming so soon after the start of the playoffs, Toronto guard Fred VanVleet said it was hard to get excited about the second-round matchup with Boston—if they decide to play it.

"Coming down here, making the choice to play was not supposed to be in vain but it's starting to feel like everything we're doing is just going through the motions and nothing's really changing," VanVleet said, "and here we are again with another unfortunate incident."

Blake was shot Sunday in Kenosha, Wisconsin. On Monday, George Hill of the Milwaukee Bucks said players shouldn't even have come to the bubble because it took focus off the racial injustice issues, where they wanted the attention to be.

Some players, including LeBron James, wouldn't comment on Hill's thoughts. But they understand the frustration of not being able to join protesters or activist groups in their communities.

"I'll be honest, I don't think there's anything we can do here that's going to stop what's happening across this country, with the latest example being Kenosha," Denver coach Michael Malone said. "I saw George Hill say in his press conference, why are we even here? Why are we doing this? By being here we're isolated and can't help where maybe we need to help. It's frustrating for a lot of players, a lot of coaches to be here."

Toronto's Normal Powell wondered if the images that TV viewers are seeing from the bubble, such as players wearing Black Lives Matter warmup shirts, have become so familiar that that aren't resonating anymore.

"It's starting to get washed out," he said.

Players are trying to figure out not only how to revive them, but keep them going long after they leave the bubble. James has focused on the need to vote, not only in November but long after, no matter who wins the presidential election.

But voting comes later. Players want actions they can do now.

No fan, no-hitter for White Sox's Giolito

CHICAGO (AP)—Lucas Giolito quietly walked to the mound for the ninth inning, piped-in fake crowd noise wafting through the park and cardboard cutouts dotting the stands.

Moments later, in this strangest season of all, the Chicago White Sox right-hander threw the final pitch in a truly bizarre performance.

A no-fan no-no.

With the seats at Guaranteed Rate Field empty, Giolito pitched the first no-hitter of the pandemic-delayed year, striking out 13 in leading the White Sox over the Pittsburgh Pirates 4-0 Tuesday night.

"I've been working for this type of game for a while now and it's really cool that we got it done," Giolito said.

Sounds like he didn't mind that nobody saw it. Well, almost no one.

After right fielder Adam Engel extended to catch Erik Gonzalez's slicing drive toward the line for the final out, the hollers of Giolito's teammates in the middle of the diamond echoed around the ballpark.

"I'm just stoked for Lucas and so happy and ecstatic and emotional for Lucas," Engel said. "It stinks we couldn't celebrate the way most no-hitters get celebrated."

The smallest crowd listed for any no-hitter in the majors over the last 100 years came in 1944, when a mere 1,014 watched Cincinnati's Clyde Shoun beat the Braves at Crosley Field.

Nowhere close to that number on this night, not with the park that holds over 40,000 closed to fans because of COVID-19 protocols.

Suffice to say, years from now when White Sox fans fondly remember Giolito's gem, there will not be, say, 100,000 or so people who claim they were there to see it in person.

AP

Chicago White Sox pitcher Lucas Giolito delivers a pitch during their Major League Baseball game against the Pittsburgh Pirates on August 25, 2020, at Guaranteed Rate Field, Chicago, IL

Mariners 8, Padres 3

J.P Crawford homered, doubled and drove in three runs for Seattle in a win over San Diego that snapped the Padres' seven-game winning streak.

Austin Nola also homered for the Mariners, who won their fourth straight and for the fifth time in six games. Nola and Evan White had three hits apiece.

Indians 4, Twins 2

Shane Bieber corrected some unusual early control issues to strike out 10 and Francisco Lindor hit a two-run homer to lead Cleveland past Minnesota.

Bieber (6-0) allowed two runs and four hits in six innings as the Indians ended a four-game losing streak to the Twins and pulled within 1 1/2 games of the division leaders.

Red Sox 9, Blue Jays 7

Rafael Devers hit a three-run triple to highlight Boston's six-run outburst in the sixth inning as the Red Sox rallied to beat Toronto.

Devers, who snapped an 0-for-10 streak with a single in the second inning, hit a full-count slider from A.J. Cole, giving Boston an 8-6 edge. Devers later scored on a sacrifice fly by J.D. Martinez as Boston recorded its sixth comeback win of the season.

Phillies 8, Nationals 3

J.T. Realmuto hit a three-run homer, Jake Arrieta pitched five strong innings before a rain delay of more than an hour ended his night, and Philadelphia beat Washington.

Realmuto ripped his ninth homer in the third inning off right-hander Erick Fedde. His shot bounced up off the top of the right field wall, then fell in the Nationals' bullpen while Washington outfielder Adam Eaton looked on helplessly.

Tigers 7, Cubs 1

Jonathan Schoop hit a grand slam in a five-run sixth inning as Detroit beat the Cubs.

The Tigers have won three of five since a nine-game losing streak dropped them out of serious postseason contention. Chicago still leads the NL Central despite going 5-8 in its last 13 games.

Spencer Turnbull (3-2) picked up the win with 5 2/3 scoreless innings.

Rays 4, Orioles 2

Tyler Glasnow struck out a career-high 13 over seven innings and AL East-leading Tampa Bay beat Baltimore.

Glasnow (1-1) fanned nine of his final 10 batters. The 6-foot-8 right-hander allowed two runs, five hits and one walk.

Hunter Renfroe and Manuel Margot hit back-to-back homers for the Rays, who have won eight of 10.

Marlins 4, Mets 0, Game 1
Marlins 3, Mets 0, Game 2

Brian Anderson laced a two-run double in the fourth inning and three pitchers combined on a four-hitter as Miami completed a doubleheader sweep of the Mets.

Four Marlins pitchers combined on an eight-hit shutout in the opener.

The Mets, playing for the first time since a player and a coach tested positive for the coronavirus, were shut out in both ends of a doubleheader for the first time since they were swept by the Montreal Expos on Aug. 5, 1975.

Astros 6, Angels 3, Game 1
Angels 12, Astros 5, Game 2

Brian Goodwin drove in three runs as the Angels snapped a three-game losing streak by beating Houston in the second game of a doubleheader created by the approach of Hurricane Laura.

In the first game, rookie Cristian Javier (3-1) allowed three runs in 5 2/3 innings and the Astros used a five-run first to beat the Angels.

The Angels got to Houston starter Brandon Bielak (3-2) for four runs in the first.

Brewers 3, Reds 2

Brandon Woodruff pitched six strong innings, Orlando Arcia snapped a 2-for-21 stretch with a go-ahead base hit in the fourth inning, and Milwaukee beat Cincinnati.

Woodruff (2-2) allowed two runs on four hits and struck out eight and walked one. Josh Hader handled the ninth for his seventh save that gave the Brewers consecutive wins for the first time this season.

Athletics 10, Rangers 3

Matt Olson and Marcus Semien connected on two-run homers, Stephen Piscotty lined a bases-clearing double and Oakland routed Texas.

Tony Kemp scored three runs without hitting the ball out of the infield, starting on a wild pitch in the second inning when he took a huge lead with a shift on and came home even though the ball didn't go far from the plate. The speedy second baseman walked, was hit by a pitch and had an infield single.

Royals 5, Cardinals 4

Ryan McBroom had two hits and drove in the winning run with a single in the eighth inning, Ryan O'Hearn added a solo homer, and Kansas City beat St. Louis.

The Royals had lost six of their previous eight games before the victory.

Foles pulls ahead as Trubisky struggles

CHICAGO—Tuesday appeared to be a significant day in the Bears' quarterback competition for two reasons: Both quarterbacks threw more passes than they had in any other practice open to the media in camp and for the first time, Mitch Trubisky truly struggled with his accuracy.

Following an hour-long lightning delay at Halas Hall, the Bears managed to get their full practice in, although it required some an encouragement from head coach Matt Nagy after a sluggish return to the field.

"I thought it was a little slow start at first, so we had to get on them a little bit," Nagy said. "I think that's a little bit natural, but they reacted well after those 1-on-1s and we were able to get in our long drive drill there at the end of practice where we go 18 plays with the (first-team). It gets them a little bit conditioned."

The long drive drill was one of two new wrinkles in the quarterback competition. With the starting offensive line going 18 plays in a row, the quarterbacks split the reps, each getting nine snaps. Prior to that period, we saw a "slot-pass drill," featuring two wide receivers against the three defensive backs.

"You got a nickel, a corner and a safety versus two receivers and then you just work combo routes (against) different types of coverages," Nagy said. "It's advantage of defense so if it didn't look good on offense, it's advantage defense the whole way."

Like most of the quarterback competition, the results were mixed for both Trubisky and Nick Foles.

The slot-pass drill gave the defense an advantage and it resulted in Trubisky's first interception of training camp in team drills. He threw a pass behind rookie wide receiver Darnell Mooney and it was picked off by cornerback Duke Shelley. However, two passes later, Trubisky delivered one his best passes of camp, uncorking a dime to Javon Wims on an out-and-up down the right sideline. Unfortunately, two high passes to Ted Ginn Jr. in the period were a warning sign of what was to come. In 7-on-7s, Trubisky forced a pass to Wims downfield when he had an option open underneath (more on this in a minute). Later, he was way late on a throw to Jimmy Graham and was inaccurate on several throws in the 11-on-11 period.

"There's a couple balls I think he would want back, a few here or there just with the accuracy might not be exactly what he wanted," Nagy said.

Foles was also guilty of an interception in the slot-pass drill, although it appeared to be more on Mooney, who was the intended target on the play. In 7-on-7s, Foles forced one to Cole Kmet and it was picked off by rookie cornerback Jaylon Johnson. It was a bad decision, but it was also his only significant mistake of the day. Two snaps later, Foles threaded the needle on a really nice touchdown pass to Anthony Miller, who was more active Tuesday. Foles also hit Wims on a deep cross in 11-on-11s and was generally accurate throughout the practice, although the degree of difficulty was questionable compared to Trubisky. ***(AP/NBC)***

Messi favors Manchester City as landing spot

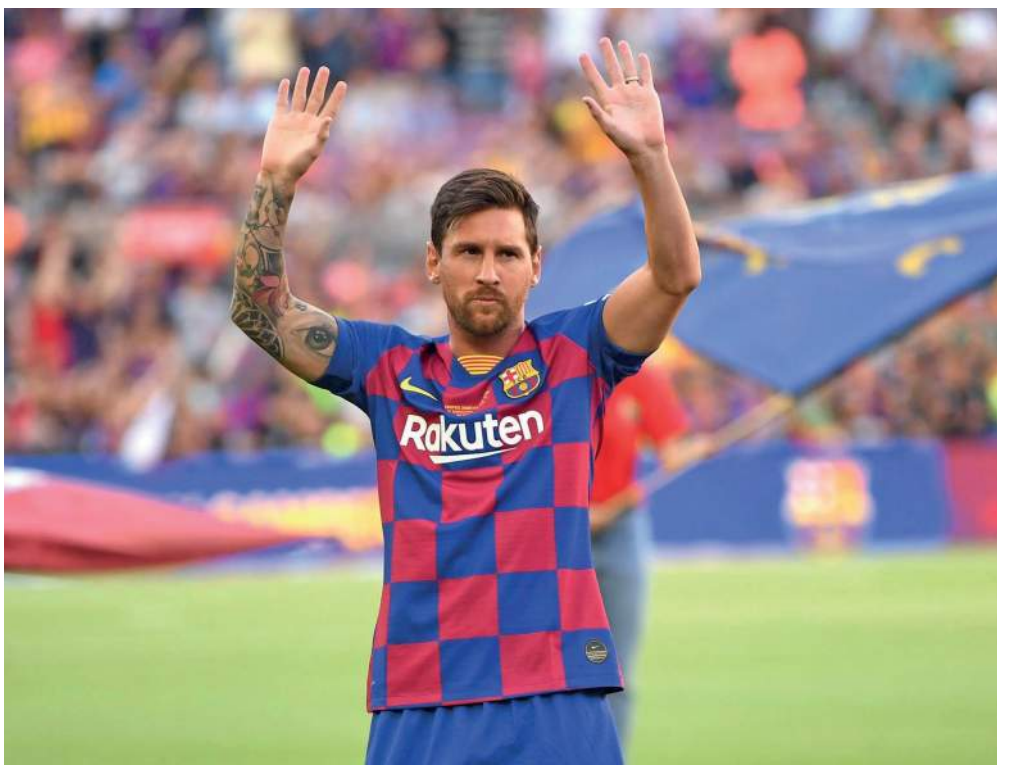
SPAIN—Lionel Messi might already have a destination in mind after making the Earth-shaking decision to ask out of FC Barcelona on Tuesday.

The six-time Ballon d'Or winner favors Manchester City as the setting of the next chapter of his career, according to Marcelo Bechler of Esporte Interativo. The Athletic has also reported that Messi would be "keen" on a move to Manchester City.

Manchester City manager Pep Guardiola spoke with Messi on the phone last week about a potential move to Manchester. Manchester City has reportedly been crunching the numbers to figure out how to add Messi without breaching Financial Fair Play rules, and is growing optimistic about the prospect.

Manchester City fans need no introduction to FFP, as the club received a two-year Champions League ban due to such rules. The ban has since been overturned, aiding the club's pursuit of Messi.

Messi told Barcelona on Tuesday that he wants to leave after nearly two decades at the club, having grown unhappy after a trophy-less season ended with a humiliating loss to Bayern Munich in the Champions League.



AP
Lionel Messi wants out of FC Barcelona and favors moving to Manchester City in the Premier League.

Barcelona confirmed to The Associated Press that Messi sent the club a document expressing his desire to leave. But the club hinted that a legal battle could be coming and said it won't automatically grant the Argentina great his wishes. Barcelona said it told Messi in response that it wants him to stay and finish his career at the club.

The dispute centers around a clause in Messi's contract.

Barcelona said the document sent by Messi referenced a clause allowing him to leave for free at the end of the season. However, the club said the deadline for triggering that clause expired in June and that it would seek legal advice. Messi's contract also includes a 700 million euro ($826 million) buyout clause.

The Spanish season would normally have ended in May but was pushed back because of the coronavirus pandemic.

"If Messi is to leave Barcelona by activating a release clause, then I hope the club (tries) to help, not hinder him," former England and Barcelona striker Gary Lineker said on Twitter. "He's been fiercely loyal and their greatest ever player. It would be terribly sad if it finished with a fight between the player and the club."

If Messi can leave for free, he will have no shortage of suitors. However, only a handful of clubs could realistically afford to pay his wages even without a transfer fee -- with mega-rich Paris Saint-Germain and Manchester City widely seen as perhaps the most likely destinations.

The 33-year-old Messi has won a record six Ballon d'Or awards during his time at Barcelona as the top player in the world, and has helped the club win 10 Spanish league titles and four Champions League crowns.

Messi's announcement came 11 days after Barcelona's humiliating 8-2 loss to Bayern in the Champions League quarterfinals, one of the worst defeats in the player's career and in the club's history.

The defeat capped a difficult season for Barcelona—the first without a title since 2007-08—and ignited one of its worst crises ever.

Messi had been outspoken about his dissatisfaction with some of Barcelona's decisions this season, talking about the team's problems and contesting club directors. Sporting director Eric Abidal, who was criticized by Messi, left the club last week.

Messi had been silent since the loss to Bayern, though, raising doubts about his future. The defeat may have been the tipping point for the playmaker. He and his teammates faced furious Barcelona fans who confronted them and criticized the team at the club's training center after the squad returned from Portugal.

Club president Josep Bartomeu had said he was confident that Messi would finish his career with Barcelona, and that he was a crucial part of incoming coach Ronald Koeman's plans for the team.

Koeman met with Messi last week and the player reportedly told the Dutchman that he saw himself more out than in at the club at that moment.

The coach reportedly had already told other key pieces of the squad that they were not in his plans, including Luis Suarez, Arturo Vidal, Samuel Umtiti and Ivan Rakitic.

After the loss to Bayern, Barcelona announced it would make "profound" changes to the first team and a "wide-ranging" restructuring of the club. The changes began with the firing of coach Quique Setien a few days after the Champions League defeat in Lisbon, and new presidential elections were called for March. ***(AP/NBC)***

SLEEP

From Page 20

pert Dave Van Auken this week, Weaver said he is going all out in their UFC Fight Night in Las Vegas, Nevada on Sept. 12, as he needs one big win to prove he deserves to be in the company of the best fighters in the world.

"I just need one big performance win to get up there. I had some bumpy roads in my career, but during those times after going those bumps, I came out hard," said Weaver, who holds a 15-5 record and 1-1 in the Ultimate Fighting Championship.

The Alabama native prevailed in his UFC debut against Rodrigo Vargas in UFC Fight Night 167 in February this year, but failed to impress MMA fans and experts, as Weaver won via disqualification (illegal knee) late in the first round. The 28-year-old then returned to the octagon cage on May 30 only to lose to Roosevelt Roberts via submission (rear-naked choke) at the 3:29 mark of the second round

Weaver took the fight against Roberts just eight days before their duel and admitted he lacked enough preparations due to the short notice. Against Camacho, Weaver believes he is heading into the right directions as far as training for the battle is concerned, as he has six to eight weeks to prepare.

"I am at the gym, picking up techniques from guys I am working with. We're working on a game plan. I am working on my natural strength, I grapple like a bull, and working on being a sniper, assassin out there," Weaver said.

Like Camacho, Weaver badly needs the win in next month's bout, as he has two fights left in his UFC contract and the results of their lightweight encounter will determine whether he gets another deal with the biggest MMA promotion company in the world.

"Frank is a tough guy, but I need to see him sleep or get him beat up badly. I will come out to crank 'The Crank.' I'll put him to sleep. That's if I don't knock him out first," said Weaver, who trains with the American Top Team in Florida.

Camacho is in California with Team Oyama for a training camp, too, and will head to Las Vegas a week before the last bout in his second contract with the UFC.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Frank "The Crank" Camacho, fourth right, poses for a photo with his fellow MMA fighters training at Team Oyama in California.

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tions, World Athletics, and all other relevant stakeholders to ensure that we can support athletes and federations in this difficult time," O'Shaughnessy said.

OCEANIA ATHLETICS ASSOCIATION
In this file photo, the CNMI's Traven Quitugua, center, races in the 100m qualifying run during the 2019 Oceania Athletics Championships in Queensland, Australia.

Clippers roll past Mavs to retake series lead

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Sports

No fan, no-hitter for White Sox's Giolito

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8 athletics events canceled

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

As anticipated, the Oceania Athletics Association scrapped eight competitions under its zone this year, including the Micronesian Regional Championships.

In a press statement, OAA competition manager Tom O'Shaughnessy said that after the Oceania Athletics Council Meeting last Aug. 20, the association came up with the difficult decision of canceling regional tournaments due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Besides the Micronesian Regional Championships, which Saipan was supposed to host in June, but was initially suspended, other events shelved were the Melanesian Championships in Fiji, the Polynesian Championships in Tonga, the Oceana Half Marathon/ Marathon, Oceania Combined Event Championships, Oceania Cross Country Championships, and Oceania 50K Walk Championships, which were also scheduled in Australia, and the Oceania Trail Championships in New Zealand.

Northern Marianas Athletics president Ramon Tebuteb said they support OAA's call, as the health and safety of athletes and all the stakeholders in the sport must come first. He added that the tough decision was made after OAA got inputs from member federations, particularly the countries hosting the various competitions.

"With these major events canceled, we must find ways not only how to keep our athletes in the region safe from the pandemic, but also to help them remain in shape as there will be more competitions awaiting them next year," Tebuteb said.

The NMA president also said that they will continue to work with both local and federal authorities and other concerned agencies to navigate their way towards getting back athletics activities in the CNMI once it's safe to do so.

Meanwhile, OAA recognized the impact of the cancelation of the tournaments to athletes and their respective federations, so the association is working on other ways to support their preparations for the Tokyo Olympic Games next year and the 2022 World Championships in Oregon. Some of the canceled events were supposed to be used as Olympic qualifiers in the region.

"OAA continues to work with all our member federa-

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OCEANIA ATHLETICS ASSOCIATION
In this file photo, the CNMI's Oldie Roligat, left, and Tyler Santos, compete in the 2019 Oceania Athletics Championships in Queensland, Australia. The Commonwealth's athletes will not be seeing action on the track this year with the cancelation of eight tournaments due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

'The Crank' foe: I'll put him to sleep

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Frank "The Crank" Camacho's opponent, Brok "Chata Tuska" Weaver, has sent a strong warning to the Marianas warrior, saying he will put him into sleep.

In the Fight Bananas' Podcast hosted by MMA ex-

See SLEEP on Page 19

FIGHTING BANANAS
Frank "The Crank" Camacho, left, and Brok "Chata Tuska" Weaver will cross paths in a pivotal battle in the UFC Fight Night in Las Vegas, Nevada on Sept. 12.